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THE VAN DOREN BROTHERS IN AMERICAN LETTERS

KATHERINE WOODS¹

Carl Van Doren received the Pulitzer Prize for biography with his *Benjamin Franklin* in 1939. Mark Van Doren received the Pulitzer Prize for poetry with his *Collected Poems* in 1940. The fraternal juxtaposition was interesting. A memorable feature of interest also is in the place of the two brothers as representatives and interpreters of their country and as directors in the channels of its public's reading and thought—you might call it their "Americanism."

That means, of course, the American quality and content of their work. It has nothing whatever to do with patriotism or any other emotion, and its relation to physical background is merely circumstantial. Nor is its force lessened by the fact that Carl Van Doren's first published book was a biography of Thomas Love Peacock and Mark Van Doren's first critical treatise was on the poetry of John Dryden; or that Carl edited *An Anthology of World Prose* and Mark, after bringing out his *Anthology of World Poetry*, won a special fame some years later with a new study of Shakespeare. The Van Dorens are protean figures both! Yet the fact remains that Carl Van Doren's most important work has been in the appreciation (in the true sense) of American genius, the exposition of the course of American literature, the portrait-biography of one of the greatest Americans against the realized background of his times, and, in his own memoirs, the study of the recent American scene; and that

¹ Member of the staff of the *New York Times Book Review*, working chiefly with biography and serious fiction; contributor to the *Atlantic*, *Saturday Review*, and *Books*.

Mark Van Doren's best-known poems have come to fruition from the soil and setting of his native land. One might even go so far, perhaps, as to find an American quality in the freshness with which Mark Van Doren, after "teaching Shakespeare" to university classes for almost twenty years, "dared," as Lewis Gannett put it in his review in the *New York Herald Tribune*, "to write a book called *Shakespeare*, and to write it almost as if no man had ever written about Shakespeare before."

The integration of their work in their country is fundamental. It has a kind of inevitable consistency, I think. And it has also the vital maturity which has passed beyond self-consciousness. It is possible that I feel this the more strongly because my own recent personal preoccupations have been less with the thought and literature of the United States than with that of France. But all the more, then, am I impelled to point to it.

To do this, one had best go back to Carl Van Doren's birth in 1885 in the village of Hope, Illinois, and his early boyhood on an Illinois farm. His brother Mark was born in the same village in 1894. Carl was fifteen and Mark six when they moved to the university town of Urbana, and each took his A.B. degree at the University of Illinois before going east for a Doctor's degree at Columbia. The Midwest locale may be taken as symbolic; but that the American rural setting was significant, Carl Van Doren, writing in *Three Worlds*, clearly shows.

When Carl was five, the physician Charles Lucius Van Doren transplanted his family from village to farm. And on a farm a boy worked. As the oldest child, Carl soon took on not only the milking but a sense of family responsibility—and it was a happy family, be it said, and a happy childhood. Farm chores may offer, too, the blessing of solitude. "Squatting on a three-legged stool, my head pressed against the cow's flank but my eyes alert for her lashing tail, I made up patriotic speeches, orotund and magnificent." By six in the morning, however, the milking was over and the ploughing began. "For five hours I steered the plough back and forth among the rows, turning the grass and weeds up to the deadly sun, and leaving a wake of warm, mellow loam for my bare feet. From eleven to one I stopped work for food and a longer rest than most farmers took.

Then back to the field till six again." A hard-working, isolated life: certainly pregnant years, as well.

And there was reading. I barely remember when I could not read, and except in the most crowded seasons I read hours a day. Few current books ever reached Hope. We had the works of Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Mark Twain. We had Shakespeare, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Whittier. I read Fenimore Cooper and Irving, *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* and *The Last Days of Pompeii* and *Little Women* and *Quo Vadis*. We all read.

In a recent questionnaire Carl Van Doren has been quoted as listing the Bible among the great books with which he was not extremely familiar. Here in *Three Worlds* he says that when he was a boy in Hope *Ben-Hur* was read "as if it were part of the Apocrypha."

Elsewhere in the same book he lets it be seen quite simply that nothing could have kept him from becoming a writer and a scholar. In writing, his first dreams were of poetry. During his college years he learned to value exactness: "Scrupulous truth was beautiful, careless error was ugly. I told myself that it would be cheap and mean ever to pretend to know anything I was not sure of, or not to know anything I had had chance and reason to find out."

These are important factors in the intellectual gestation of a critic. There are two lines in Carl Van Doren's autobiography which also tell us something very important. As he left college, he had to choose between two possibilities in teaching for the following year—college or preparatory classes; each offered opportunity for graduate study, but the college work, which he preferred, paid less than half the salary of the preparatory-school teaching.

"'Why, you little fool,' my father said, '*you can't afford to make money at your age.*'"

The italics are my own. The force of the advice is universal.

As no doubt everyone knows, Carl Van Doren was first a college teacher, then the headmaster of a girls' school in New York City, an editor of magazines and books and anthologies, and always a writer. He left the Columbia University faculty in 1916, and in 1919 he retired from all scholastic work to give his time to writing. He became a critic, and at once made his mark, at a time when criticism itself was "passing out of the hands of the professors into those of the journalists" and when creative and critical writers alike were

breaking with tradition, determined to forge something new; in that "age of militant individualism" we have the perspective now to see and evaluate Carl Van Doren's place. As Louis Kronenberger astutely pointed out in his article on *Three Worlds* in the *New York Times Book Review*, in September, 1936,

unlike some of his companions he never took to dancing in the streets. It was his difference then, as it has come to seem his distinction now, that he chose a more sober and less flashy rôle. . . . He has seemed perhaps the most journalistic of our professors, the most professorial of our journalists, and each background has been helpful in purifying the other; he has escaped being stodgy and pedantic as he has escaped being noisy and cheap.

And whether one thinks of him first as journalist or as professor, what stands out is his soundness of analysis and judgment and his precision of expression. These are the more impressive in that his output has been nothing short of prodigious.

From that large and varied mass of Carl Van Doren's writing I want to look particularly at four books. One is the memoir *Three Worlds* (Harper, 1936), which I have been quoting. Another is, of course, his great *Benjamin Franklin* (Viking). The other two are interpretative outlines: *The American Novel* (Macmillan), first published in 1921 and brought up to date in a revised edition in 1940; and a remarkable little volume called *What Is American Literature?* (Morrow). This last was first published in California as *American Literature—an Introduction* and was addressed to a limited audience of foreign and foreign-born American readers; two years later, in 1935, it was brought out for more general circulation, with a new title, in New York. With its bibliography and index it fills only 128 small-size, large-print pages. It could slip into a man's pocket or a woman's purse; unless and until its contents are completely familiar it ought to do just that! It gives every reader a remarkably rich and clear knowledge of American literature, and it introduces Carl Van Doren not merely as professor or journalist or both but as scholar, thinker, writer, of remarkable penetration and gifts.

For this slim volume's content is a people as well as their greatest books. Americans in general, as these keen eyes see them, "have lived with hope as their most familiar mood. . . . Even the pessimists among them, bitterly pointing out that America was not Utopia, have ordinarily assumed that it ought to be." And Carl Van

Doren sums up their attitude in the nation's second half-century: "Books were not a first concern of the animated nation. . . . With so much to do, and so little time in which to do it, few Americans stopped long enough to understand what was being done. . . . Yet out of the literature of the confusing age there now emerge, whether the age itself realized it or not, certain strong voices which at a distance sound above the half-century's uproar." And then: "New England was dry with old orthodoxies. Emerson blew them away like ashes." Thoreau "never found reality, which is not found by hunting for it. But Thoreau found himself. Men as far away as Tolstoy and Gandhi were to recognize him as their teacher. . . . In the long run he has become what he was from the first: a hero of the mind, not legendary or abstract but concrete and positive." The populace, says Carl Van Doren,

visualized the nation in the figure of Uncle Sam, lank, sharp, boastful and synthetic, turning the neat proverbs of Franklin into the tall talk of the backwoods and pronouncing them with a Yankee twang. For much of America Uncle Sam was as accurate as any caricature. But there was also another America which Emerson and Thoreau knew. This America had learning, taste, manners, and it nourished occasional men of power, like those of Concord. Emerson and Thoreau made heroes, and their heroes helped remake America.

Then there was Poe, whose poems, "magical and haunting, keep to the single theme of beauty, and beauty dying. . . . Beauty existed in itself. . . . Those who lived for it must work for it. . . . These were lonely ideas in the America of Poe's time, given up as it was to patriotic duty and moral conscience." Later, of our literature's two epics, Carl Van Doren writes unforgettably: "*Huckleberry Finn* is the epic of America's happy memory as *Moby Dick* is the epic of America's unquiet mind."

I have quoted these full-packed sentences from a small and important book partly because only quotation can show the gratification—amounting almost to excitement—which they offer to anyone who loves the English language and is interested in American history and literature; and partly, too, because they point to an essential quality in any critic's—or historian's, or biographer's—mind. That is, of course, the quality of assimilation; perhaps "saturation" would be the better word. Carl Van Doren is a figure of vital influence in American letters not only because of his shrewd and bril-

liant judgment and his gifts in the use of words but because behind judgment and phrase is a mind saturated with its subject—assimilated knowledge not merely of the detail at hand but of all unspoken details that have gone before. He may be pointing to the genius of Elinor Wylie or Sinclair Lewis or remembering that of Hawthorne or Henry James: knowledge has perfected itself in becoming absorption, and thus judgment is born.

For to know more than one sets down is more than the essential of scholarship in a writer. It is the essential of criticism, if by "criticism" we mean something that reaches beyond an ephemeral existence and a narrow field. Good writing, from scholar or critic, is a distillation. When, fifteen years or so ago, Carl Van Doren threatened, in a book of critical essays called *Many Minds*, to retire from criticism, the threat called forth from Henry James Forman in the *New York Times Book Review* some sentences of memorable praise. As historian of the current American novel, Mr. Forman wrote, Carl Van Doren was unsurpassed; "as a critic of current forms and authors no commentator has shown a saner insight. He has of late brought a new self-respect to American writers." And after declaring that Carl Van Doren possesses a "profundity of insight, keenness of judgment, open-minded fairness that not three critics in America are capable of," Mr. Forman pays tribute to his "genuine flair for American genius. He has done more toward disentangling that from the vast inchoate turmoil which is our national life than anyone else." Only of a mind truly saturated with knowledge, through and around its subjects, could such things be fairly said.

And we are brought back, so, to that quality of representation and interpretation of the American scene and literary achievement, as such. When I first read *Three Worlds*, it seemed strange to me that so perceptive a critic should have traveled in France, and even lived there for at least one summer, without noting in his memories any impact from French life or thought or literature; and when I first read *What Is American Literature?* it seemed strange to me that so punctilious a scholar should refer to Henry Adams as writing of the "cathedral" of Mont-St.-Michel. To me these things are important, but to Carl Van Doren they are not important. What is important to Carl Van Doren is the literature of his own language and especial-

ly of his own country, and the development of that country's intrinsic life. In that vast and multitudinous knowledge his mind is indeed drenched. So he has reflected the American scene in *Three Worlds* and produced a brief masterpiece of education and stimulus—"infinite riches in a little room"—in *What Is American Literature?* So he has written uncounted critical essays whose authority is lasting; and so in the first history of the American novel he filled a book (*The American Novel*) with richness and suggestion and a warm glow of learning and insight as well as an amazing mass of detail.

And so, when he had completed his first half-century of living, he brought forth his great biography of one of the greatest Americans. His other work has been most important for its influence, its value as teaching, no matter whether or not we like to use that word. But *Benjamin Franklin* will live in its own sure place, for itself.

The author worked on it for ten years. It is a monumental volume of eight hundred full-sized, well-filled pages, and Mr. Van Doren says that it could easily have been three times as long. From beginning to end it is absorbing reading. And it fulfils superbly its author's bold and determined purpose of wholeness. His chief aim, he writes in the Preface, has been "to restore to Franklin, so often remembered piecemeal in this or that of his diverse aspects, his magnificent central unity as a great and wise man moving through great and troublous events. No effort has been made," he adds, "to cut his nature to fit any simple scheme of what a good man ought to be. Here, as truly as it has been possible to find out, is what Franklin did, said, thought and felt. Perhaps these things may help to rescue him from the dry, prim people who have claimed him as one of them. . . . I herewith give him back, in his grand dimensions, to his nation and the world."

With fascinating aliveness, he does just that.

Another Van Doren trait which is, we hope, lastingly American may well be mentioned at this point: liberalism. Not a doctrinaire liberalism, nor yet an impassioned delving into social problems, but a sane and natural liberalism of mind. Carl Van Doren was one of the writers who defended James T. Farrell's *A World I Never Knew* from charges of obscenity, in Yorkville Court, New York City, in February, 1937. The book expressed, he said, the "effort of the nov-

elist to represent people in a truthful way," and its tradition went back to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and its family life. It is amusing now, too (but, alas, not only amusing), to remember that Carl Van Doren was one of six teachers at the Labor Temple school in New York who were excoriated in October, 1921, by Archibald Stevenson, counsel for the Lusk Committee. Dr. Will Durant was director of the school, which Mr. Stevenson alleged to be a "hotbed of radicalism and un-Americanism." With specific details of Carl Van Doren's teaching no fault seems to have been found: the complaint was evidently focused on the fact that the school's "expositor of American literature" was also an editor of the *Nation*!

The *Nation*, as a matter of fact, appears as a sort of proving-ground in Van Doren family careers. When Carl Van Doren retired as headmaster of the Brearley School in 1919 he became literary editor of the *Nation*, a position which he held until 1922; after that he continued for some time as contributing editor, although engaged in other work. Mark Van Doren was then literary editor of the *Nation* from 1924 until 1928 and motion-picture critic from 1935 to 1938. Dorothy Graffe Van Doren (Mrs. Mark Van Doren) went to the *Nation* as assistant editor in 1919, became associate editor in 1926, and held that position until 1936. Irita Bradford Van Doren, Carl Van Doren's first wife, was on the *Nation's* editorial staff from 1919 to 1922, served as advertising manager in 1922 and 1923, and in 1923-24 preceded her brother-in-law as literary editor.

Mark Van Doren is a commanding figure as poet, anthologist, literary critic, editor, professor of literature at Columbia University, even as novelist. Before devoting the final pages of this article to him alone, it may be interesting to pause for further notes on the activities of other bearers of the Van Doren name.

Irita Van Doren, literary editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, is the most renowned of these. When a literary supplement for that newspaper was established in 1924 under the editorship of the celebrated critic, teacher, and essayist Stuart Sherman, Mrs. Van Doren was appointed as his associate. Upon his death in 1926 she succeeded to the editor's chair, and for fourteen years she has made the *Herald Tribune Books* one of the country's outstanding literary weeklies. Her daughter Margaret Van Doren, who illustrated her first book at the age of fourteen, has already made a name for herself in that field

and is also the author-illustrator of a delightful book for children, *Thomas Retires*, in which an aging milk-delivery horse tries country-ease and is so bored he can't stand it. And in *Three Worlds* Carl Van Doren tells how their youngest daughter, Barbara, "wanting a better horse than she had, decided to write a book and earn the money herself. She wrote it in a month the summer before she was fifteen. But she used a pseudonym when it was published, so that too many of her acquaintances might not hear about it."

Dorothy Van Doren is best known as a novelist, having published four books in this genre. But although she was not born a Van Doren, she exhibits the Van Doren versatility in literary gifts. In addition to writing fiction and working on the *Nation's* editorial staff, she edited *The Lost Art: Letters of Seven Women* (1929) and was coeditor with Alfred Bernheim of the Twentieth Century Fund's important report on the government's role in labor relations, published in 1935 under the title of *Labor and the Government*. Her most recent novel, *These First Affections* (1938), tells with tender appreciation the story of a little girl's life from six to fourteen in the midst of insecurity. Her earlier novels were *Strangers* (1926), *Flowering Quince* (1927), and *Brother and Brother* (1928). Last year she won *Liberty* magazine's thousand-dollar short-story prize.

When Mark Van Doren's *Shakespeare* (Holt) was published last year—a few months after the *Collected Poems* (Holt), which received the Pulitzer Prize—Mary Colum wrote in *Forum*: "The best criticism has been written by men who could write in other literary forms beside the critical one: Mark Van Doren's poet's training has made him an expert in expressing himself without verbiage and has helped him to pick out unerringly from Shakespeare the passages that show most wonderfully the dimensions of Shakespeare's genius." We come, so, to Mark Van Doren's poetry—the poetry which the same magazine summed up as "distinguished interpretation in verse of the American scene":

It was September, and the weeds were mowed
For the last time along the narrow road.
Sunlight speckled down, as leaves would fall,
Shortly, upon the gravel; and by the wall
Chipmunks quietly ran. . . .

They are not all so simple as that, in word or cadence, the poems in this collection, which comprises six published volumes of a poet's work from 1922 to 1938. Some are less simple, we may think, than we should wish them to be. But in them is depth and wisdom and beauty. And it is fitting that the final section in the book should be that of "America's Mythology":

America's great gods live down the lane;
Or up the next block blend their bulk with stone;
Or stand upon the ploughed hills in the rain;
Or watch a mountain cabin left alone. . . .

Of the *Collected Poems* as a whole, Howard Baker wrote in *Books*: "The variety and freshness of subject matter are unusual. And yet the subject matter is almost always the American scene in one way or another—landscape and climate, animals and people, incidents and legends and faiths."

As the poet's work shows the very soil and fruit and flowering of his country, so the professor of literature at Columbia writes in closeness to his own feeling as a poet in his book about Shakespeare. Critics more versed than I in the history of literary commentary have given this book high praise: it is "by far the best modern commentary," one says and seems thus to sum up for critical opinion generally. But to me this is a precious book first and always because it is the sincere and lovely and deeply thoughtful book of a modern poet about the greatest poet of all Christendom. How Mark Van Doren's analyses of the plays compare with all the other analyses that have been written I simply do not know; nor is that sort of analysis the thing in which he himself is interested. What I do know is that his introductory essay on Shakespeare as poet and dramatist is a five-page treasure of clear and resonant wisdom, and that it is a rare and poetic scholar who writes of the subject of *Richard II* (to take one example) not only as the reign and deposition of an English king but "also the beauty of the English language considered as an instrument upon which music can be made." Here, too, the scholar is one with his material, in the complete assimilation within his mind. And incidentally it is interesting to recall Lewis Gannett's comment on the "incredible precision of verb and adjective" in this work of Mark Van Doren's. It is a book to be cherished by all of us

who love this priceless possession of ours in the English language itself, and who feel ourselves enriched by the right appreciation of its greatest poetry.

Nor could any other volume fill the gap which would be left in my own library if Mark Van Doren's invaluable *Anthology of World Poetry* should be snatched away. . . .

As anthologists and editors, both the Van Doren brothers have rendered yeoman service to the country's knowledge and taste. It was Carl who edited the *Anthology of World Prose* in 1935, which followed *Modern American Prose* (1934) and preceded *The Borzoi Reader* (1936). Not editing, but original work, was the brothers' joint *American and British Literature since 1890*, which was addressed primarily to learners, and yet was considerably more than a textbook. In 1927 Mark Van Doren did an interesting piece of work in editing the diary of Samuel Sewall, Salem's eighteenth-century judge who took part in the witchcraft prosecutions. In 1932 he edited the *Oxford Book of American Prose*. When his study of Dryden's poetry came out in 1920, there is a charming note in Carl's reaction: "In all my supervision of research," the latter has written, "I never took such pride in anything as in Mark's work on Dryden." Significant, too, is Mark Van Doren's astringent comment, made during the course of a lecture on American literature under the auspices of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences in 1929, that "American literature has suffered from overstudy of insignificant figures."

Both brothers, too, have written fiction: Carl a book of short stories, *Other Provinces* (1925), and a novel, *The Ninth Wave* (1926); Mark, two novels of rather curious psychological nature, *The Transients* (1935) and *Windless Cabins* (1940). John Chamberlain made a noteworthy comment on Mark Van Doren when in his review of the first-named novel (*New York Times*) he called the author "one of those human beings so balanced that he can combine the careers of metaphysical poet, anthologist, teacher and journalist without loss of his essential flavor and integrity." Again and again we are struck by the brothers' versatility and energy, as by their excellence, in a vast output.

It is perhaps a sequential, rather than a paradoxical, statement

that their permanency in American letters is not that of their printed pages alone. Each has written at least one book which posterity will know, and that is important. But something has gone out from each of them, also, which will perpetuate itself among our people beyond the authors' initial words. If their names were to be forgotten, their influence would be renewed in new critical avatars: the influence of what they have done and, in judgment, standard, execution, of what they have recognized.

THE POETRY OF JONATHAN SWIFT

HERBERT DAVIS¹

It has become a fashion of these days to attempt revaluations—a pleasant enough game but too likely to lead merely to a reversal of the values of the previous generation. The critic and the literary historian are of course obliged as a result of fresh knowledge or of a new point of view constantly to rearrange their material; and it is tempting to bring forward some writers whose work is less commonly noted and to eliminate altogether the stock figures who have been given a central place in the textbooks. Take Milton away from the seventeenth century, for example—immediately Donne and Dryden look different, and we are better prepared perhaps for the greatness of Pope. There would be no great harm done—indeed, it would be rather fun in a lecture to imitate this method, and to startle you by a fresh challenge. Forget the “line of wit”—as it has been called—from Donne to Pope, change the focus, take a longer view up and down the centuries, and who will be left as the most fascinating and the most dominating figure between Milton and Blake—who but Jonathan Swift? Yes, you would probably reply, we know that he was generally acknowledged by the Augustans as the greatest wit and satirist, the greatest genius even of that age, and he is often spoken of still as the most perfect writer of English prose. But nobody has ever claimed that he was a great poet. He can be witty in verse, and he can be satirical; but his poems are all oc-

¹ President of Smith College; editor of Swift's *Prose Works* (14 vols.; Shakespeare Head Press, 1939).

casional pieces, bagatelles; he never even attempted to write a serious, a great, poem.

You have only to turn to the earlier editions of Swift's *Works* to see that that was the general attitude. The poems were reprinted as they stood in the original miscellany collections, and others inserted at odd places throughout the twenty volumes. Later in the nineteenth century there was one handy and pleasantly printed edition in the Aldine poets, which remained the most useful edition (though the text was merely a reprint from Scott's edition) until at last—two hundred years after they were written—a thoroughly reliable text and full annotation have been provided by Mr. Harold Williams in three handsome volumes printed by the Clarendon Press in 1937. With this in our hands there is no longer any excuse for thinking of Swift only as a prose writer and neglecting his poetry.

Here the poems are not only separated from the rest of Swift's work but separated from the work of his friends, the canon fixed, arranged in chronological order, and provided with a full apparatus showing all revisions and corrections, which in many cases Swift made for publication. Indeed, when we see the care with which some of the poems were written and afterward revised, we may well be on our guard before accepting too readily Swift's protests that he really cared little to have them preserved.

Indeed, we know definitely that Swift was not pleased with the way in which Pope edited the *Miscellanies* of 1727-32 and actually must have taken much more interest in the preparation of the Dublin edition—as shown by the *Letters to Ford*, which have recently been published for the first time—than he allowed his friends in London to believe. I wish only to emphasize that Swift, like Dryden, wrote with facility both in verse and in prose, and no completely satisfactory estimate of his position is possible without giving full attention to both. Indeed, it has been pointed out more than once by those who have the best right to speak that we are "closer to Swift in his verse and in his letters, than in his prose writings." These are Mr. Harold Williams' words, and he goes on to quote Dr. Elrington Ball:

Without knowledge of his verse a true picture of Swift cannot be drawn. In his verse he sets forth his life as in a panorama, he shows more clearly than in his

prose his peculiar turn of thought, and he reveals his character in all its phases. . . . Before the testimony of his verse the work of many of his biographers will not stand.

For this reason, I might add, I recommend to your attention this new edition of the *Poems* as by far the most important contribution to the study of Swift that we have had for a long time. Year by year new lives of Swift are published, and sometimes we get a slightly fresh point of view, which makes them interesting; but none of them have added to our knowledge of the details of Swift's work and of his friendships and enmities and of his changing moods, as Mr. Harold Williams has done in editing the *Poems*.

But it is not my concern to tell you more of what you can better read for yourselves. I wish rather to speak about these poems as part of the body of verse published in England in the first forty years of the eighteenth century and to suggest that it has an interest not merely as biographical material but as literature and with particular force for this generation.

It is not easy to decide how best to approach Swift's poetry; it is so occasional, so varied in form and in mood. For my purpose there is perhaps an advantage in looking at it in the order in which it was published—to see it as Swift authorized its publication from time to time. The first publication of which we can be certain was an "Ode to the Athenian Society," with a prefatory letter dated Moor Park, February 4, 1691, and signed Jonathan Swift, which was printed in the *Supplement to the Fifth Volume of the Athenian Gazette* in 1692. It is the only one of his Pindaric odes which he printed himself, and it was reprinted three times during his life, though he probably would have preferred it to be forgotten like the rest of his early work. But it is worth looking at carefully. It is wholly in the manner of the time, reminding us in its form of that most popular poet Abraham Cowley and in its subject of that amateur scientist Sir Thomas Browne. Here indeed are "the wild excursions of a youthful pen, full of enthusiasm, quitting the 'narrow Path of Sense For a dear Ramble thro' Impertinence,' attacking the Wits, Epicureans, and atheists—'those who've made Railing a Rule of Wit and Obloquy a Trade.'" It is common to speak of the turgid eloquence of these Pindarics; but it must be admitted too that a certain

rough force is there and in the midst of compliment and enthusiasm for things which Swift was soon to regard as misguided and absurd, there is already a touch of scepticism, an awareness "how fleeting and how vain our Learning and our Wit, how subject to the attacks of Censure and Pedantry and Pride."

It was not till 1711—twenty years later—that Swift authorized the publication, in a *Miscellany* also containing some of his early prose, of fifteen poems, some of which had already been attributed to him in unauthorized collections put out by Curll in 1709 and 1710. The contrast between these poems and the Pindarics is complete. The new poems are all humorous or satirical, and the language used is emptied of all rhetoric; the vocabulary and the order is the same as that of everyday speech or, as Swift himself puts it, "Something in Verse as True as Prose."² Their character is most easily indicated by describing them as by the author of *A Tale of a Tub*. And the change that had come over Swift while he lived with Sir William Temple and had driven him from poetry to satire is told in some lines written in 1693, occasioned by Sir William Temple's late illness and recovery, which were not printed till 1789.

Ah, should I tell a secret yet unknown,
That thou ne'er hadst a being of thy own,
But a wild form dependent on the brain,
Scatt'ring loose features o'er the optic vein;
Troubling the chrystal fountain of the sight,
Which darts on poets eyes a trembling light;
Kindled while reason sleeps, but quickly flies,
Like antic shapes in dreams, from waking eyes:
In sum, a glitt'ring voice, a painted name,
A walking vapor, like thy sister fame.³

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There thy enchantment broke, and from this hour
I here renounce thy visionary pow'r;
And since thy essence on my breath depends,
Thus with a puff the whole delusion ends.⁴

² "Horace, Liber 2, Satire 6 imitated" (See *Poems of Jonathan Swift* [ed. Harold Williams], I, 199).

³ *Poems*, I, 54.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

I don't know whether among the many papers that Swift wrote and destroyed there were any attempts at a comedy; it was a way, as his friend Congreve had shown, to quick fame and preferment. But a poem like "Mrs. Francis Harris' Petition" makes one think that Swift might well have developed a vein of superb comic dialogue. He shows here an astonishing power—such as Wordsworth, for instance, never had—of taking the very phrases of ordinary common speech and tossing them without any awkward inversions into simple rhyming verse.

So the *Chaplain* came in; now the Servants say, he is my Sweet-heart,
Because he's always in my Chamber, and I always take his Part;
So, as the *Devil* would have it, before I was aware, out I blunder'd,
Parson, said I, can you cast a *Nativity*, when a *Body's* plunder'd?
(Now you must know, he hates to be call'd *Parson*, like the *Devil*.)
Truly, says he, *Mrs. Nab*, it might become you to be more civil:
If your Money be gone, as a *Learned Divine* says, d'ye see,
You are no *Text* for my Handling, so take that from me:
I was never taken for a *Conjurer* before, I'd have you to know.
Lord, said I, don't be angry, I'm sure I never thought you so;
You know, I honour the Cloth, I design to be a *Parson's* Wife,
I never took one in *Your Coat* for a *Conjurer* in all my Life.
With that, he twisted his Girdle at me like a Rope, as who should say,
Now you may go hang your self for me, and so went away.⁵

You may say this is doggerel, not verse; but there is the same power in the excellent narrative of "Baucis and Philemon," in which the tone is carefully adapted to the burlesque form, if you read it as Swift first wrote it before the revision made under the influence of Addison. This is, of course, in the manner of *Hudibras*, whose vigor and roughness Swift always admired. But in his own handling of the octosyllabic couplet he adds variety and range and, without losing any of the spontaneity and ease of movement, achieves an economy which reminds us of his prose.

We are too often reminded in Butler of that method of writing verse which he himself glances at in this passage:

But those that write in Rhime, still make
The one verse for the others sake:
For, one for sense, and one for Rhime,
I think's sufficient at one time.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Swift is never content with one verse for sense and one for rhyme. Even when he uses the heroic couplet, which he instinctively avoided for the most part as unnecessarily long, he fills the line without the use of recurring epithets, which so often make it monotonous. And when they do appear in the usual places, they carry their full weight of meaning:

The Turnkey now his Flock returning sees,
Duly let out a Nights to Steal for Fees.
The watchful Bailiffs take their silent Stands
And School-Boys lag with Satchels in their Hands.⁶

Those are the last lines of a "Description of the Morning," which had appeared in the *Tatler*. But Swift was prouder of his later contribution—"A City Shower"—of which he writes to Stella: "They say 'tis the best thing I ever writ, and I think so too." Here we find already two elements so often present in his verse, which give his satire a double edge—a criticism of life put into a form which is at the same time a parody of current fashions in literature. While Addison and Pope were politely and urbanely making fun of the extravagances of sophisticated society, being at the same time charmed and attracted by it and accepting the foundations upon which it was built, Swift was to become a ruthless exposé of its shams and pretenses and injustices, a sceptical and critical observer of its glories and its boasted Augustan grandeurs. It was a joke to write a poem about the smells from the sink, the washing on the line, and the contents of the open drains at the side of the London streets, just as it was a joke later on to write about the intimacies of the lady's dressing-room or the marriage bed. And his readers for the most part accepted it as the humor of this eccentric and witty Dean, who could write about anything from a broomstick to the lord treasurer's staff of office. But some of his jokes had a wry flavor, and they suspected that he was a dangerous person, very different from the kindly Mr. Addison, or even Mr. Pope, who had unfortunately come too much under his influence and turned wholly to satire instead of writing pretty pastorals, translations, and soothing moral pieces.

I wish only to emphasize that in a *jeu d'esprit* like the "City Shower," written like "The Rape of the Lock" in mock-heroic vein,

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

there is a force of stark realism which comes very near to a contemptuous criticism of the whole show, as well as in the last lines a savage parody of Dryden, which Swift was careful to point out in a note to a later edition.

The next collected edition of Swift's poems did not appear until 1727, under the editorship of Pope, but in the meantime a good many pieces had appeared separately or in unauthorized collections, which were generally recognized as his work though not openly acknowledged by him. In these, for the most part, he uses verse as a politician's weapon rather than as the amusement of a man of letters. In his claim later on that

... Malice never was his Aim;
He lashed the Vice but spar'd the name

he was conveniently forgetting these anonymous pieces written in the service of a party or a political cause. Where, indeed, except perhaps in Byron will you find in English better examples of personal invective than the lampoons against the Earl of Nottingham, the Duke of Marlborough, the Duchess of Somerset; and later on against Swift's enemies in Ireland—Lord Chief Justice Whitshed, Lord Allen, the Hon. Richard Tighe, and Sergeant Bettesworth—or that all-inclusive lampoon upon the whole Irish House of Commons under the excellent title of "The Legion Club." It is together a formidable body of invective, worthy to stand beside such prose writings as his *Character of the Duke of Wharton*.

It is interesting to compare such work with the satirical portraits of Dryden and Pope. I should be inclined to say that Swift is more emotional and personal. Dryden—the master of contempt, as he has so well been called—is comparatively aloof and distant in his manner, Pope triumphantly gay as he flicks his victims round the ring like a circus master. In Swift's fiercest attacks there is no room left for any sense of play, for any of the tricks of the virtuoso—a fierce indignation burns within him, fed by his outraged sense of justice, his bitterness at the hollow mockery of so much human greatness. In the best of these pieces of invective his emotion is mastered, his words are clear and simple:

His Grace! impossible! what dead!
Of old age too, and in his bed!

And could that Mighty Warrior Fall?
 And so inglorious, after all!
 Well, since he's gone, no matter how,
 The last loud trump must wake him now:
 And, trust me, as the noise grows stronger,
 He'd wish to sleep a little longer.
 And could he be indeed so old
 As by the news-papers we're told?
 Threescore, I think, is pretty high;
 'Twas time in conscience he should die.
 This world he cumber'd long enough;
 He burnt his candle to the snuff;
 And that's the reason, some folks think,
 He left behind *so great a s—k*.
 Behold his funeral appears,
 Nor widow's sighs, nor orphan's tears,
 Wont at such times each heart to pierce,
 Attend the progress of his herse.
 But what of that, his friends may say,
 He had those honours in his day.
 True to his profit and his pride,
 He made them weep before he dy'd.

Come hither, all ye empty things,
 Ye bubbles rais'd by breath of Kings;
 Who float upon the tide of state,
 Come hither, and behold your fate.
 Let pride be taught by this rebuke,
 How very mean a thing's a Duke;
 From all his ill-got honours flung,
 Turn'd to that dirt from whence he sprung.⁷

It begins so quietly, with a sneer that is hardly perceptible, proceeds with a few crude jokes, as though the subject were worth no serious consideration, and ends with a sort of dismissal as complete as it is devastating:

From all his ill-got honours flung,
 Turn'd to that dirt from whence he sprung.

Notice that if you change two words in those lines you would have an almost conventional epitaph:

From all his earthly honours flung,
 Turn'd to that dust from whence he sprung.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 296-97.

A great deal of Swift's verse if examined carefully would, I think, prove to be a sort of verbal parody of this kind. The worst of the verses written against the Hon. Richard Tighe, called "Clad All in Brown," is actually a parody on the tenth poem of Cowley's *Mistress*. They are a good example of the kind of thing D. H. Lawrence came to indulge in, which he called "Nettles" and described as bursts of anger, flung out spontaneously and providing the writer with a vent for his feelings—the sort of feelings it is good to get rid of. But it must be admitted that Swift is rather the moralist, concerned not so much with his own emotional condition as with the effect he aims to have on his readers. Even after the death of Chief Justice Whitshed, he still feels it to be his duty to pursue such a villain, and so he puts out all sort of squibs, which can be hawked about the streets in such form as to stick in the minds of the populace.

In sharp contrast to these poems of political and personal enmity are the many delightful pieces that Swift wrote at the same time to his political allies and personal friends. Here, also, the tone varies from the urbanity of delicate compliment—rare in Swift—to a charming raillery, particularly apt in its varying tone when concerned with friends like the Lord Treasurer Harley or Lord Carteret, according as they were at the moment in Swift's good graces or not. The verses which he wrote at Market Hill, where he stayed with the Achesons, are the kind of thing written in the first place simply to delight a circle of friends, though Swift was usually aware that they would be showed further and copied and eventually printed. Such are the "Birthday Poems" to Stella. It is difficult to understand, indeed, how Swift was persuaded by Pope, so soon after the death of Stella, to allow the series of poems which he had written to her for her birthday almost regularly to appear in the *Miscellanies* of 1727, unless it seemed to him a sort of fair return to Stella after the Vanessa poem had just been given to the public.

The last of this series is of its kind, I think, as good as anything Swift wrote. It is very simple and full of deep feeling; and it is worth noting that in that mood Swift becomes the moralist. It is the art of poetry, of writing verse, reduced to the very simplest terms.

This Day, whate'er the Fates decree,
 Shall still be kept with Joy by me:
 This Day then, let us not be told,
 That you are sick, and I grown old,
 Nor think on our approaching Ills,
 And talk of Spectacles and Pills;
 To morrow will be Time enough
 To hear such mortifying Stuff.

O then, whatever Heav'n intends,
 Take Pity on your pitying Friends;
 Nor let your Ills affect your Mind,
 To fancy they can be unkind.
 Me, surely me, you ought to spare,
 Who gladly would your Suff'rings share;
 Or give my Scrap of Life to you,
 And think it far beneath your Due;
 You, to whose Care so oft I owe,
 That I'm alive to tell you so.⁸

You may say that such poetry is too personal; and I fear that there is rarely in Swift that disconnection between the poetry and the personality that Eliot desires. It is probably impossible to read any of the best of Swift's verse without hearing as it were the voice of a particular person speaking on a particular occasion and at a particular time. Even when he speaks as a moralist of generalities it always has an individual ring; one could not claim that it has been transformed, that it has suffered a sea change into something new and strange, timeless and eternal.

Swift as a poet of love and marriage may seem a strange topic, though it has in fact provided good material for the modern psychological critic. His cynicism, his antiromantic attitude, is always explained in terms of his own abnormal nature. A cold nature, or perverted, producing not only such satire on marriage as found in *Cadenus and Vanessa* but such abominations as the "Strephon and Cloe" poem and the "Lady's Dressing Room." Aldous Huxley, for instance, has commented on Swift's almost fantastic loathing for the physical bodies of men and women, and you will find much

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 763-66.

criticism of the same kind among comments on the fourth book of *Gulliver's Travels*.

I would only remind you that there is equal violence in the traditional attitude of both Christian and pagan moralists of most ages. And I would suggest that it is instructive—leaving out of account for the moment Swift's own peculiarities—to consider this body of poetry alongside much of Restoration comedy as the fullest expression of a reaction against that extraordinary phenomenon in life and literature—the almost religious conception of romantic love dominant from the twelfth to the sixteenth century. This conception was practically unknown in the earlier Christian centuries. The story has been superbly told by Mr. C. S. Lewis in his book, *The Allegory of Love*, which traces it from the troubadours to Spenser. It came to life again in the European poetry of the nineteenth century and is so prevalent in the main tradition of English poetry that we sometimes forget the completeness of the reaction during the seventeenth century. The comedy of the Restoration with its gay cynical world of cuckoldom is an almost perfect burlesque of the code of the courts of love, where romantic love was always something outside the relation of marriage; and the love poetry of Swift is an equally complete and, I am sure, partly conscious burlesque of the Spenserian ideal of romantic love brought within the Christian conception of marriage. Swift's poetry has nothing in common with the cynicism of the younger Donne or of the Restoration poets. It is rather a most violent expression of the view of the moralists, put down with the most realistic and sometimes repulsive detail.

Is there then any justification for the style of these poems, the disgusting images, the paltry lines?

The only answer, not wholly satisfying perhaps, is to be found in a long poem written in 1733 and published the following year in London—*An Epistle to a Lady who desired Swift to make Verses on Her, in the Heroick Stile*. It begins very innocently as a conversation with Lady Acheson and turns into political satire so outspoken as to cause the government to take action against the printer. But we are more concerned with the less political parts. The lady asks him to desist from doggerel rhimes. The Dean in his reply says:

I, as all the Parish knows,
Hardly can be grave in Prose:

Still to lash, and lashing Smile,
 Ill befits a lofty Stile.
 From the Planet of my Birth,
 I encounter Vice with Mirth.
 Wicked Ministers of State
 I can easier scorn than hate:
 And I find it answers right:
 Scorn torments them more than Spight.

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Thus, I find it by Experiment,
 Scolding moves you less than Merriment.
 I may storm and rage in vain;
 It but stupifies your Brain.
 But, with Raillery to nettle,
 Set your Thoughts upon their Mettle:
 Gives Imagination Scope,
 Never lets your Mind elope:
 Drives out Brangling, and Contention,
 Brings in Reason and Invention.⁹

And so he continues to the end, using this same method, even in his two more formal and ambitious poems, published in dignified form in folio at the price of one shilling—the two poems which are the best known of his verse and which challenge comparison with the greatest of Pope's Epistles, the Epistles to *Augustus* and to *Dr. Arbuthnot*. *On Poetry: A Rapsody* was published in London on December 31, 1733. It was probably written during that year, and it has generally been regarded as among the best of Swift's poems. It has the same force as his best prose, it contains his finest irony, and it can be read for itself without any personal implications, though directed of course unmistakably against the court and the London of George II. It is well called a rapsody; though its mock rhetoric surges within the rigorously squared banks of the octosyllabic couplet.

Not *Empire* to the Rising-Sun,
 By Valour, Conduct, Fortune won;
 Nor highest *Wisdom* in Debates
 For framing Laws to govern States;
 Nor Skill in Sciences profound,
 So large to grasp the Circle round;

⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 634-36.

Such heavenly Influence require,
As how to strike the *Muses Lyre*.

Not Beggar's Brat, on Bulk begot;
Nor Bastard of a Pedlar *Scot*;
Nor Boy brought up to cleaning Shoes,
The Spawn of *Bridewell*, or the Stews;
Nor Infants dropt, the spurious Pledges
Of *Gipsies* littering under Hedges,
Are so disqualified by Fate
To rise in *Church*, or *Law*, or *State*,
As he, whom *Phebus* in his Ire
Hath blasted with poetick Fire.¹⁰

It moves on ironically indicating the way to poetic honors at such a time and is led to a survey of Grub Street and the petty traders there who prostitute their wares and so very neatly leads up to the splendid irony of the lines to George II, his court and his ministers.

The *Verses on His Own Death*, though already written, were not published until 1739, and then they appeared in London in a shortened version which had been edited by Pope. Swift was not satisfied with this, and the complete poem was published by Faulkner in Dublin in the same year. Both were several times reprinted. It is well known, and I do not need to discuss it at length, especially as I have written¹¹ all I had to say on the more complicated problems concerned with these differing versions and the earlier draft, called *The Life and Genuine Character of Doctor Swift*.

It may be permitted, however, just to notice how in this sort of valedictory poem, which necessarily becomes, like Pope's *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, a sort of apologia, Swift manages to gather up a great many of the various strands of his poetry. The tone throughout is humorous and gently satirical; he can pass from compliments to his friends to a final hit at his enemies with little change of tone. That is easier because Swift's compliments are almost always covered, conveyed obliquely. And the satire is at the expense of his own frailties; elsewhere in the same fashion he smiles a little grimly at the weakness of others, as in the passage in which he dramatizes the scene after his death. The excellence of this poem is largely

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 641.

¹¹ See my article, "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift," in the *Book Collector's Quarterly*, II, 57-73.

due to a tranquillity, in which irony is softened by humor, as the whole comedy is looked back upon after it is over. Perhaps there had been too much satire in his vein, but he tries to think that he had set down nought in malice and hopes that there will be none who will carry resentment against him. And even then at the end he cannot resist one last bitter joke:

He gave the little Wealth he had,
To build a House for Fools and Mad:
And shew'd by one satiric Touch,
No Nation wanted it so much:¹²

But he may well have thought that no Irishman would resent a good joke, even at his own expense.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RECENT SCHOLARSHIP IN AMERICAN LITERATURE¹

ERNEST E. LEISY²

American literature has proved to be the last big bonanza of literary scholarship. The harvest is ripe, and the workers are not few. Until recently the student of our literature was without honor, not alone abroad, but in his own country. His field lay fallow while scholars threshed the thinning straw of the eighteenth century or argued the origin of ballads or the fine points of Shakespeare and Chaucer and Milton. The popular conception of our literature in my not too distant youth was illustrated by a familiar fireside picture of six patriarchal faces—the benevolent authors of "Maud Muller," "The Village Blacksmith," "The Death of the Flowers," and other trite and sentimental subjects. As I recall it, the two naughty boys—Poe and Whitman—were carefully excluded from this innocuous fireside exhibit. If the attitude reflected by this picture had been confined to the prospering hardware merchant or to the Rotarian whose education stopped at the eighth grade, it would not have been

¹² *Ibid.*, II, 572.

¹ Part of a symposium on American Literature held at the University of Oklahoma, May, 1940.

² Professor of English, Southern Methodist University.

so bad. It extended to our scholars, who spoke sneeringly of the "kind of person who undertakes research in American literature." Obtuse as this condescension was, I do not complain of it. It was helpful. It made us careful. And it gave us the thrill of pioneers working a new area. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!"

By the time of the World War Americans felt an increasing sense of national dignity. Coincident with it appeared an unusually rich creative period of poetry and fiction and drama, which questioned the kind of civilization which we had reared. From these facts scholars took their cue and at last seriously undertook a study of our literature as a revelation of our culture. By 1922 sufficient progress had been made for Professor Quinn to conclude his very able inquiry into "American Literature as a Subject for Graduate Study" with the remark that "the subject is no longer considered a by-product of British letters, dubious in its intrinsic worth and incapable of that resisting power which true scholarship demands as one of the qualifications of research material."³

Two years later Professor Pattee traced the growth of "American Literature in the College Curriculum"⁴ from the first offering by Moses Coit Tyler in the University of Michigan in 1875 until it had won academic recognition as an independent subject in practically all the American colleges. "The recent war," Professor Pattee pointed out, "by cutting off research visits to England and the universities of the Continent and by its stimulation of national consciousness, gave the subject in all the colleges a tremendous impetus."

In 1926 it was my privilege, as secretary of the American Literature Group of the Modern Language Association, to publish the results of a questionnaire which went out to approximately three hundred colleges.⁵ In all but fourteen of the one hundred and fifty colleges which replied the course in American literature was not required or was required only of those who elected English as their major subject or planned to teach; yet nearly all colleges reported a

³ *Educational Review*, LXIV (1922), 7-15.

⁴ *Educational Review*, LXVII (1924), 266-72.

⁵ See *School and Society*, March 6, 1926, pp. 307-9.

large voluntary enrolment in the subject. The most regrettable item brought out by the report was the fact that only thirty-five of the instructors mentioned graduate work in American literature as part of their equipment. Most of them had specialized in some other field and were teaching American literature as a side line, with an attitude that anyone could teach a subject so familiar and so simple! I have recently examined the English courses in a score of college catalogues from various parts of the country, and, while I note little change in the courses, the instructors are better trained, the textbooks more scholarly, and the reference books in the field are far more plentiful than they were in 1926.

The improvement is, of course, due to the research activity in our field. The little group which had investigations in American literature at heart kept a file of dissertations, and in 1929 founded a journal. The first Doctor's dissertation in American literature of which I have record was accepted in 1894 by Yale—C. A. Schumacher's "Sources of Longfellow's Poetry." By 1930 I reported 177 dissertations as having been completed in American literature and related fields, most of which had been written during the 1920's. By 1933 it was possible to compile the fullest list yet made of doctoral dissertations in American literature;⁶ this list included 406 completed dissertations and about 200 in progress. Professor Gregory Paine, my successor as bibliographer, has just reported 650 dissertations completed, 240 in progress in some 40 universities here and abroad; and about 365 articles in more than a hundred journals during the past year!

The larger number of these dissertations have dealt with some individual major or minor author. But research has by no means been confined to them. There have been such studies in linguistics as "American Colloquial Idioms" and "The Ithaca Dialect"; local literature has been examined in "Dr. George William Bagby: A Study of Virginia Literature" and in "Literature of the Middle Western Frontier"; folk song has had attention in Canada, in West Virginia, and elsewhere; periodical literature was drawn upon not only in

⁶ J. B. Hubbell and E. E. Leisy, *Doctoral Dissertations in American Literature* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1933). Since 1934 Donald B. Gilchrist has published annually a list of *Doctoral Dissertations Accepted by American Universities*.

Professor Cairns's early monograph but in Miss Cook's "Literary Influences in Colonial Newspapers," in Uhler's "Literary Taste and Culture in Baltimore, 1815-1833," and in Waples' "Whig Myth of Fenimore Cooper"; stage histories have been made for our principal cities; the literature of travel has been less exploited, but there have appeared Miss Mesick's "The English Traveller in America" and Spiller's "The American in England"; the influence upon our literature of several English writers has been traced—notably that of Byron, Dickens, Wordsworth, and Scott; we still await such a study of Reade, Trollope, and Bulwer; the foreign reception of our literature is more difficult to trace, but students in related departments have given us "French Criticism of American Literature before 1850," "Longfellow in Spain," "Emerson and Goethe"; the various literary forms have been studied—the sonnet, the natural-history essay, the historical novel, and the like; finally, there have been ventures into appraising various aspects of American thought: "Antislavery Sentiment Prior to 1865," "Economic Unrest in American Fiction, 1880-1901," "The Establishment of Orthodoxy in Massachusetts," and "The Origins of American Critical Thought."

These dissertations—varied and extensive as their scope is—do not give the full picture. They do not take into account the even more important work of research and synthesis by more mature scholars like the late Professors Parrington, Cairns, and Campbell, and by Pattee, Quinn, Foerster, Boynton, Canby, Williams, and others. Professor Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927) has done as much as any single work to change our attitude toward the political, economic, and social interpretation of our literature. Despite its Jeffersonian bias, which tended to slight the authors of belles-lettres, this work has given American literary history much of its present perspective and general outline. Its national scope effectively displaced Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America*, which Professor Pattee said should have been entitled "A Literary History of Harvard University, with Incidental Glimpses of the Minor Writers of America"! Professor Foerster's "Factors in American Literary History"—namely, the European background and the American frontier as evidenced in the Puritan tradition, the Romantic movement, and the development of realism—have also

left their stamp on our interpretation. The Puritans have been studied further by Murdock, Miller, Hornberger; the frontier, by Hazard, Dondore, Boynton; American humor, by Rourke, DeVoto, Blair; the class struggle, by Calverton and Hicks.

The Cambridge History of American Literature, especially through its bibliographies, did much toward placing useful tools in the hands of American scholars. Those bibliographies are now twenty years old and, considering the immense amount of research that has taken place in the last two decades, are hopelessly inadequate. Fortunately, the annual bibliographies in *PMLA* began in 1921, and there is no gap in the inventory of the materials available. Soon after the founding of the *American Literature* quarterly, an annotated list of "articles on American literature appearing in current periodicals" was instituted, and this has proved invaluable to all workers in the field. *The Dictionary of American Biography*, in twenty volumes with each article compiled by an expert, is a dependable reference work of the first order. The "American Writers Series," under the able editorship of Harry Hayden Clark, has focused on each of the major writers all important research of a biographical or critical nature to date. Clark's own *Major American Poets* has brought the new critical and historical perspectives to bear directly on the teaching of our poetry. Walter Taylor's *History of American Letters* (1936), with its Bibliography of one hundred and fifty pages, compiled by Harry Hartwick, is a more satisfactory guide than the well-known Moody and Lovett is to English literature.

In the field of the drama Professor Quinn's volumes are invaluable. This is the place to speak of the stage histories of all our principal cities, from Professor Odell's monumental history of the New York stage to Mr. Shockley's study of the Richmond theater. A project is now under way at the University of Chicago to compile a comprehensive dictionary of the American stage. In the field of the American novel Professor Quinn has also made a notable contribution, and Van Doren's book has recently been revised. Wright's bibliography of *American Fiction* prior to 1850 has been the most valuable addition to our tools in years. Craigie's *Historical Dictionary of American English* and Miles Hanley's *American Dialect Dictionary* and *Linguistic Atlas* are useful studies of the language. Professor

Mott's *History of American Magazines* is now in its third volume, which brings that indispensable reference work down to 1885. It is, I think, the only undertaking which the Modern Language Association through its revolving fund has helped us to publish!

Progress has also been made in establishing authentic texts of various American works, although much remains yet to be done. Dr. Max Farrand of the Huntington Library is preparing a definitive text of Franklin's *Autobiography*. The Facsimile Text Society has included among its publications Brown's *The Power of Sympathy*—the "first" American novel—Hannah Foster's *The Coquette*, the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, *The American Magazine*, the 1829 and the 1831 editions of Poe's *Poems*, Franklin's *Dissertation on Liberty*, and Cooper's *Letter to Lafayette*. Only two concordances have yet appeared—G. S. Hubbell's *Concordance to Emerson's Poetry* and the *Lanier Concordance* by Graham and Jones, published by the University of Texas Press.

Let no one despair lest materials for research be soon exhausted. Facts must be related to ideas.

For out of olde felde, as men seith,
Cometh al this newe corn fro yeer to yere;
And out of olde bookes, in good feith;
Cometh al this new science that men lere.

The scholar may relate American writers to contemporary ideas in religion, politics, ethics, philosophy. The field of comparative literature, though students have probed into the Continental backgrounds of Emerson, Thoreau, Poe, and others, is still a promising one. Anglo-American, Anglo-French, and Anglo-German relations deserve further study. It is true that work in related fields should be left to the ripened scholar, but beginners might consider individual authors.

As one looks over the studies of the last two decades, one finds many minor writers emerging from obscurity to claim their share in this movement or that. The major writers also have needed definitive biographies, based upon the careful examination of source material. Beginning with Hervey Allen's *Israfel* and Emory Holloway's *Whitman* in 1926, the years have been strewn thick with new biog-

ographies. Unfortunately, a number of these—like Gorman's *Longfellow* and Mordell's *Whittier*—were written by debunking journalists who kept no balance between ascertained fact and inference or, like Krutch's *Poe* and Brooks's *Ordeal of Mark Twain*, were written to a thesis. In welcome contrast to the recent studies of American authors in terms of Freudianism, humanism, psychoanalysis, and Marxist philosophy, it is refreshing to come upon the newer analytical biographies of Emily Dickinson by George Whicher, of Hawthorne and Whitman by Newton Arvin, and of Thoreau by Henry Seidel Canby.

As a result of recent studies the reputations of the New England school—Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Holmes—have been declining, while Bryant, Irving, and Hawthorne appear to hold their own, and Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, Cooper, Melville, and Emily Dickinson now loom larger than formerly. Take Emerson, for example. Since the publication of the Centenary edition of his works in 1903 and of the *Journals*—published from 1909 to 1914—there has been an increasing interest in the great transcendentalist. The recent publication of a volume of his sermons and of a large collection of his letters is paving the way not only for a large number of special studies but for what Professor Rusk hopes to make a definitive biography. Irving has been fortunate at the hand of American scholars. There is Williams' definitive biography, there are bibliographies by Langfeld and Blackburn and by Williams and Miss Edge, and there are the Geoffrey Crayon and the Knickerbocker editions of the complete works. Claude Bowers' recent account of Irving's stay in Spain, written with understanding and charm, added little fundamentally because the basal work on Irving has been done.

Some of the other major figures have not fared so well. Charles Brockden Brown is to have a biography by David Lee Clark of the University of Texas, but there is no well-edited edition of all his works. Tremaine McDowell has investigated the early career of Bryant; but we await a full biography, bibliographies, and an edition which shall include all his prose. A political and a social study of Cooper have been made, and the Spiller-Blackburn bibliography should serve as an incentive to further study of that voluminous author. We need a list of Poe's critical essays and reviews, and I

think Tom Mabbott is likely to include them in an edition of the works of Poe on which he is at work. Hawthorne's biography cannot be written until his kinsfolk show themselves more gracious in relinquishing biographical material. The voluminous writing about Melville since 1921 necessitates a bibliography and a new biography. Emory Holloway, C. J. Furness, and H. S. Sanders have in hand an exhaustive bibliography of Whitman; there is need of a more complete edition of many volumes of his poetry and uncollected prose. Raymond Adams is working on a definitive biography of Thoreau. Bernard DeVoto is working on the papers left to the Mark Twain estate. T. F. Currier's bibliography of Whittier is a model in kind and should be followed by a good biography. Lawrance Thompson has given us a fuller life of young Longfellow than we have had hitherto, and Longfellow's grandson, H. W. L. Dana, is now collecting the poet's letters. Because of a reluctance of the family of a literary man to let competent scholars have access to an author's papers, it is sometimes difficult to come at the truth. It is to be hoped that George Whicher may follow his biography of Emily Dickinson with an edition of her complete poems, arranged chronologically.

The study of southern literature has been unsatisfactory because of incomplete biographies of Simms, Hayne, Timrod, Joel Chandler Harris, George W. Cable, and others. Nor is there a collected edition of Lanier. Professor Hubbell, who is conscientiously at work on a history of southern literature, is experiencing difficulty both because of lavish eulogy of southern writers by loving friends and because of harsh abuse by their enemies. The new literature which has been produced in the South since 1923 calls for special appraisal.

The facilities for making known the findings of scholars in our field are not encouraging, but we are better favored than scholars in more remote fields. Some dissertations may not be worth printing; nevertheless, the conclusions reached should be made known somehow. Less than half the dissertations in American literature have been printed, either wholly or in part. University presses have brought out a number, others have been printed privately at the indigent graduate student's expense, and a dozen or so have the imprint of well-known publishers. The gist of many has been published in *American Literature*, *American Speech*, the *New England Quarterly*,

and elsewhere; even the *PMLA* deigns now occasionally to print something on American literature! The greatest hindrance to a sound presentation of our findings is not the reluctant editor of a scholarly magazine, however, but the popular critic who rushes into print with a smattering of "facts," mostly wrong.

I have shown how the immense activity in our field has filled in and changed our conception of American literary history. We no longer view our literature from the standpoint of New England; we realize what complex strands have made up the warp and woof of our national life and thought; and we have shifted the emphasis accordingly. The newer historical and critical perspectives have been translated directly into the teaching of American literature in schools and colleges through an abundance of books reflecting these changing conceptions. Though much has been accomplished in the past decade, much remains to be done. In 1933, speaking of factors operative in American literary history, Harry Hayden Clark called attention to nine factors that had direct bearing on the short period from 1787 to 1800, whereupon Norman Foerster said there was material for five hundred theses in that area alone! At our recent meeting in New Orleans, W. F. Taylor pointed out that the term "the Gilded Age" is a term of derision which does not take into account the complex welter of forces during that period: its ebbing romanticism; its rising critical realism; the westward movement, with its speculation, local color, and realism; the influence of science and the effect of naturalism on the problem novel; the class struggle, reflected not only by proletarian fiction but by agrarian revolt as well. He made an interesting point in conclusion when he suggested that the psychological approach to literature may supplant the historical. As long as there is no agreement on what experiences are of most worth, the task for the literary interpreter is difficult, though in view of the guidance furnished by the literary experience of the past not impossible.

Permit me a few practical suggestions in closing. Let us not be overeager to do research away from great centers unless the equipment of the university concerned thoroughly justifies it. There may, of course, be local materials well worth investigating, and these need no longer lie dormant. Second, a somewhat closer liaison should be established with research groups in such closely related fields as

American history and the various modern languages. It is commendable that the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council have established a joint committee with us for the preservation of such materials of research as diaries, theatrical records, posters, photographs, and the like from being destroyed or getting into the hands of unscrupulous persons. Third, as bibliographies are becoming unwieldy, it is desirable to have in some central place a clearing house for such information. The historical records survey of the W.P.A. is making rapid progress at the University of Pennsylvania in tabulating alphabetically everything in print about every American writer.⁷ And, finally, our advisory group took definite steps in New Orleans to bring out within the next five or ten years an extensive co-operative enterprise—a literary history of some seven volumes with three volumes of bibliographies, the whole as free from geographic and critical bias as it is humanly possible to make it. Widely as we differ individually, this major project, by requiring us to think through our differences, should help us all to pull together.

LITERATURE AND CHRISTIANITY

ROBERT WITHINGTON¹

I

Nothing human is alien to the true scholar and man of letters, who must be concerned with the religious impulse as well as with the moral aim inherent in creating and interpreting great literature. After all, most educators will agree—unless they be pedants, in the narrow sense of the word—that the ultimate purpose of education is the building of character, the creation of better men and women and of better citizens not only of our country but of the world. To make the world better because we have lived in it is an aim worthy

⁷ *American Literature*, XI (1939), 81-33.

¹ Professor of English, Smith College; author of *English Pageantry*, *Excursions in English Drama*, etc.; editor of *Essays and Characters*, *Montaigne to Goldsmith*, and *Lamb to Thompson*; co-editor of *Eminent British Writers of the Nineteenth Century*.

of our highest efforts; and this is surely one of the ideals of Christianity. In attempting to attain this ideal we must of necessity make ourselves better men and women—or, in the straiter application of the phrase, save our own souls.

Ruskin uses the generic term "pastor" to include all teachers, and Carlyle regards "prophet" and "poet" as closely related, employing the latter word in a broad sense as "creative artist," and both, as "seer" or "interpreter of life." In the teaching of literature, interpreter and creator join with appreciator to make a whole; and one can hardly discuss this subject without having in the background a Christian heritage of writer and reader (even in dealing with pre-Christian literature one finds a moral background, with ethical ideals not inimical to ours). Our literature, and the teaching of it, cannot be divorced from the religious elements which have been before us since our era began, though they may be linked with the ethics of an earlier age.

There is, perhaps, in American education a tendency to point out what the teacher considers virtues to classes which are so intent upon grades that they swallow the professorial dictums without question in order to reap the benefit of his satisfaction when he reads an echo of his words on an examination paper; and we may ask ourselves if congregations who sit under spiritual leaders are not also inclined to take the utterances of these pastors docilely, not to say sheepishly, as a flock might be expected to do. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes told us long ago that when New Englanders stop arguing about politics and religion it will be because they have an emperor to teach them the one and a pope to teach them the other; and it will be an unhappy day when a critic will stop discussions about literature with *ex cathedra* pronouncements.

In English and American literature the religious aspect of life is centered in Christianity—not the dogmatism of any particular sect—and the ideals of Christianity have been voiced from *Beowulf* to our own time. It is true that the Christian passages in the Anglo-Saxon epic seem to have been inserted after the composition of the poem—perhaps by a priest, who accepted the pagan moralizing of the Scandinavian original as he sought to combine it with Christian doctrine; but the poem as we have it is no bigoted tract

or sectarian propaganda. Its lofty ideals do not conflict with whatever Christian flavor we may find in it; and, in a later age, romances incorporated the teachings of the Church with the code of chivalry, which, in turn, was (at least in part) based upon religious precepts.

From Anglo-Saxon days we have had translations of the Bible which, particularly since 1611—when the King James Version appeared—have had a notable influence upon our language and style. Many phrases of our everyday speech come from the Bible; titles of books are drawn from that source and seem to have had a special appeal, whether or not the public is aware of their origin. When, for instance, Edith Wharton published *The House of Mirth*, how many readers could spot the verse in Ecclesiastes from which she drew her title? *The Green Pastures* is taken from a better-known passage; but many titles have the succinctness of biblical phrasing which makes an almost unconscious appeal to the reader and frequently reflects itself in a demand for the books.

In his masterly paper on "The Noblest Monument of English Prose," Professor John L. Lowes has analyzed the reasons for the influence which the English Bible has had on English style. This influence was marked in the days of the Puritan ascendancy and is still felt in those places where people go back constantly to the actual text of the Scriptures. No better preparation for writing a lucid and picturesque English can be found than a thorough knowledge of the Bible and Shakespeare; he whose mind carries whole passages of the Scripture is a master of simple and effective prose.

Professor Lowes lists many phrases which have entered our daily speech from the Bible and have become so much at home that we accept them with hardly a thought of their origin—"highway and hedges," "hip and thigh," "arose as one man," "lick the dust," "a thorn in the flesh," "a broken reed," "the root of all evil," "the nether millstone," "the sweat of his brow," "heap coals of fire," "a soft answer," "a word in season," "weighed and found wanting"—most of us, he adds, could double or treble this list at will. In no other language—not even in German—has the influence of the Bible on speech been so marked as it is in English; and this is felt not only in writers like Bunyan, whose subject-matter was closely connected with the Bible, but in the classically simple prose of Lincoln.

Other examples will come to every reader's mind; it is, I think, no exaggeration to say that every great writer—at least before the twentieth century—has been imbued with the Bible.

Miss Mary Ellen Chase, in a recent paper on "The King James Version in the Work of Two Masters of Nineteenth-Century Prose,"² has studied this influence particularly in the style of De Quincey and Hardy; but she cannot pass over without at least a word this influence on Ruskin, Carlyle, Scott, Lamb, Newman, Arnold, Huxley, and Hazlitt. "Rather than to snatch here and there from the multiplicity of material at hand proofs of Biblical influence upon this one and that from Macaulay to R. L. S. and from Jane Austen to George Moore," she says, "it seems the better part of wisdom as well as of interest to select from the century two masters of prose, perhaps the greatest each in his respective field, present him in relation to the English Bible, and try to suggest its long and luminous effects in his work." The results of this survey are fruitful and, with other chapters in the volume, bear witness to the continued effect of the Book of Books upon English writers from early days. "Among the qualities which a saturation in the Bible has always lent to English style," writes Professor Lowes, "is a happiness of incidental phrase, and a swift tellingness of diction, which only a similar saturation in Shakespeare can approach in its effectiveness." From Chaucer down, no great writer (not to mention minor ones) has been unconscious of the Bible.

II

The influence of the Bible is not, of course, confined to manner. Stylistic characteristics strike, after all, only on the surface of thought. Important as manner may be, matter is of greater weight; and surely no trivial matter could be satisfactorily presented in biblical phrase. English literature would not be what it is were it

² Published in Miss Margaret B. Crook's *The Bible and Its Literary Associations* (New York, 1937), pp. 363-74. Other chapters in this book, each by a different hand, are recommended to the reader; those on the Bible in Anglo-Saxon and medieval England, on the Bible in England in the sixteenth century, on the King James Version, on Milton and the Bible, on the Bible in the hands of Baxter, Bunyan, and Fox, on the Scottish psalter, and on the biblical drama in England supplement those on the Greek Testament, on the Gothic Bible, and on the Bible and the Roman world; and those on the German Bible and Luther must be included.

not for the background of Christianity against which it was written. Both writers and readers have a standard of Christian ethics to which, ideally, at any rate, they conform and which they understand. If the story of the Japanese commission sent abroad to study world-religions be true—it brought back a report to the effect that the Christian religion was the best it had found, but it could not discover that anyone practiced this religion—it must be admitted that the English-speaking peoples have long been familiar with its tenets and accept its teachings, though there always is a great distance between preaching and practice. This, of course, holds with other religions as well, for human nature is frail. My point is that our literature would lose much of its meaning if Christian ideals were not in its background.

To spot Biblical allusions, identify Biblical characters, and locate Biblical quotations, as one might annotate secular literary material, may be the mark of cultured readers, and there are those who take a pew in St. Polycarp's Church as they take a box at the opera; but this is hardly indicative of a Christian attitude. A new—and we may hope unimportant—school of critics is rising which would judge the value of all literature from the point of view of the proletariat; as the authors stress their sympathy with the unfortunate laborer, they are ranked high, and as they ignore class struggles, they are rated lower. Such bigotry and narrow-mindedness militates against true art, which is concerned with the fundamentally human; and it must be clear that the Christian connection with art is no mere propaganda. Authors do not argue about religion; they take it for granted; they do not distort facts for the sake of gaining adherents to a cause. They do not reward their heroes or punish their villains for the purpose of inciting their readers to walk the strait and narrow path. In so far as the so-called "Sunday-school" literature gives a distorted view of life, it is almost immoral, no matter how fine the precepts it prints; and the student, taught to think, will recognize its ethical and artistic shortcomings. If the Bible addressed itself to the "lower classes" alone it would not be the book it is. Its appeal is universal.

Readers of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes will recall his emphasis on the broad religion which is close to the heart of life. Education

cannot be far removed from religious matters—though it should not have a sect appeal—and even in pre-Christian days Plato (cited by Montaigne in his essay “On Pedantisme”) included religion among the matters taught. When a boy became fourteen years old, says Plato, he was delivered

into the hands of four men, that is to say, the wisest, the justest, the most temperate, and the most valiant of all the nation. The first taught him religion; the second, to be ever upright and true; the third, to become master of his own desires; and the fourth, to fear nothing.

This may not be a wholly Christian curriculum (though we may find traces of Truth, Righteousness, Temperance, and Fortitude therein); it is, perhaps, under the first head that the study of literature would fall. For great literature occupies itself with the moral—dealing with the springs of human action and character, explaining (as far as possible) the complexity of human life. Masaryk has said that “no state or policy can prosper unless the groundwork is moral”—and this holds with every human activity. In a narrower sense, many ethical works fall under the head of “literature,” though there is much literature which is not narrowly philosophical; and the different groups of Christians possessing a common loyalty to Jesus can understand the larger group of humans loyal to an ideal outside themselves—the God of humanity, known under various different names. Whether it express the emotions of the individual or interpret life on a broader scale, great literature shows the universal in the particular and often voices a definite religious feeling.

It were useless, as it is impossible, here to specify instances of the religious spirit in great literature. This will constantly be found in the reading of each individual. It may take the form of glorifying God in some hymn or lyrical outburst; or of a consideration of the religious spirit in the writing of a Montaigne, a Thomas Browne, an Oliver Wendell Holmes, a Carlyle, a Ruskin, a Tennyson, a Dryden—their name is legion. We cannot tell to what sect Shakespeare belonged, but his works are impregnated with the religious spirit; Milton and Bunyan are more narrowly Protestant and puritanical. There are poems by Dryden and pamphlets by Defoe in which sectarianism is treated politically rather than from a more idealistic position. In the Middle Ages there was much “religious”

literature—a good deal of it in the narrowest sense—and there were satires attacking not the Church but the shortcomings of Churchmen. Perhaps every satirist is a reformer (else why his satire?) and an optimist (feeling that human nature can be reformed by his ridicule and invective). We are, possibly, less moralistic than were the Middle Ages—certainly we are less interested in dogma and in preaching—but are we any less religious?

It is as hard to define “religion” as it would be, in a few words, to define “poetry.” It is not a synonym of “moral,” though the two have something in common. The background of English literature is Christianity, the ideals of which, based on the Judaism of the Old Testament, are expressed in the New. The Bible stresses a moral code but voices much more than mere ethics; its appeal is to reason and emotion. Perhaps the best short definition of “religion”—which would apply to both savage and scientist—is the recognition of a power beyond man, however visualized. A system of ethics need not be religious or sectarian; it is the recognition of the laws underlying human conduct. Religion, on the other hand, need not be ethical, but it usually recognizes a higher code than man-made law; conventional respectability is not an essential ingredient of spiritual force. The background of our literature is no sectarian dogma, but it is one of Christian ideals, however imperfectly realized; and when we cease to judge human conduct in their light, we face a world of chaos.

It was Holmes who called good manners “surface Christianity,” and the reason for his definition must be obvious. They are based on a keen interest in the well-being of our fellows. When a satirist—be he Jonson or Shaw—calls our attention to the absurdities of our manners and customs, with a view to improving both, he may be said to be at least a moralist, as he ridicules the absurd and the bad. Good manners never come into his net. Great literature goes beneath the surface and teaches that God fulfils himself in many ways. Again, in another Tennysonian phrase:

.... What are men better than sheep or goats
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

EMOTIONAL INTERPRETATION—NEW PLAYS FOR OLD

WINN F. ZELLER¹ AND JOHANN T. REICH²

A European upon first coming to America is amazed to find that although Continental music dominates American music, the Continental drama is relatively uninfluential. Countless musicians are well known, but such estimable workers in the drama as Goethe, Schiller, Hauptmann, Schnitzler, and their equivalents are comparatively unknown in dramatic art, their works rarely performed, and their American reputation a literary one.

One explanation is that the American genius, yielding itself better to dramatic than to musical composition, has crowded out Continental competition. But to our minds the principal reason for the comparative obscurity of European drama in the United States is that symphonic music is universal and opera can be sung in the original, but plays must be translated. Since it is seldom that a translator, a playwright, and a director are the same person, it follows that the English translations are something far different from the plays for the theater written by the great playwrights.

Any dramatic director who reads the standard translations of Continental classics and near-classics knows that almost invariably the dramatic vitality, which won the plays their fame and place in art, has been lost. Lines are literate enough, but do not spring to life on the tongue, and scenes which when written had the pace, the timing, and the melody so necessary for stage presentation have become leaden-footed and tired. Nothing else could be expected when the translators are language students and not writers, or even when they are writers and still not playwrights. And even a playwright translating from a foreign tongue may not be in position to prepare a play for the American stage, unless he is also actor and director. Possibly the best translator would be one who knew plays as a stu-

¹ Director, department of drama, and professor in English, Ithaca College.

² Associate professor in drama, Ithaca College.

dent of language, of literature—a playwright, an actor, and a director.

Probably no translator will have such comprehensive training. However, through collaboration we have been able to approximate the results such a man might obtain. The process of play translation, studied simultaneously with the process of active collaboration, may be of both dramatic and literary interest. Most certainly the new translations obtained by this collaborating method are challenging to the American dramatist, be he playwright, actor, or director.

The new translations are challengingly dramatic in part because they have been translated in the course of a unique collaboration. One of us is a former Viennese director, an associate of Reinhardt, and the German translator of many American, British, and Continental plays. The other is a college director with at least enough German to complement the English studies required for a Doctor's degree. In short, one knows a great deal about the theater and Continental plays, and somewhat less English; the other knows something of the American language and theater, and somewhat less German and French. Both have had experience as actors, playwrights, literature students, and directors. During our collaboration we have worked with such authors as Hauptmann, Schnitzler, Giraudoux, Werfel, Schiller, Metzl, and one or two unknowns.

Although the materials have differed, the essence of our translating method has remained the same no matter what the type of play. The aim has been to evoke by means of an American actor's speech the same emotions which the playwright intended to provoke by the Continental actor's speech. We have said nothing about being faithful to the original written text. Nor has there been faithfulness to the normal spoken text, for even the most accurate reproduction of the original text is meaningless unless it conveys to an American audience that illusion of accelerated life which is theater. The sole desire has been to write that one line which enables an American actor to evoke the feeling produced by the only possible line—the playwright's—when an actor played it in the original. The question kept uppermost is: "What can an actor do with this?"

The most satisfactory translating technique we have found in-

volves not just reading and translating—but reading, acting, and re-creation. This technique was created out of the director's need for a script faithful to the inner dramatic meaning of a good play; it is more concerned with emotional interpretation than with linear similitude.

The Austrian collaborator first reads a free translation of the scene, clears up the meaning of unusual words, and describes the stage business. Then, instead of merely supervising the translation of these words, he acts the scene in the original language, through inflection, tempo, and intensity conveying the mood and emotional meaning of the line or scene. The American hears the rhythm, the tempo, and determines the scenic tone which playwright and director intend. So he writes down the scene which, to the best of his understanding and ability, is the American equivalent of the original, and discusses the meaning and relative formality of idioms, their connotation in this context, the anticipated emotional response. A distinction is made between English and American—a difference much greater on the stage than in other literature. Then the American plays the scene which he has just written, and the Austrian director listens for tempo, rhythm, mood, and characterization.

The entire process, which is rather more emotional than intellectual, might be likened to that physical phenomenon which occurs when one piano responds to the reverberations set up by a near-by instrument. In our case, the melody is played first in German or French, as hammers tapping on piano wires, and in the other the corresponding wires respond. The American types out the vibrations, transforming the melody into American words. Then he plays back the "music" as he has understood it; and the initial piano reverberates. If the harmony is true, very well; if not, we correct places where the melody was lost.

Perhaps this sounds suspiciously like a romantic poet attempting to explain the process of creativeness. The explanation is accurate, but it should be remembered that everything must be checked by such practical questions as: "Is this American speech or literary English? How will it sound when spoken by an actor before an average audience? Is it true to the character? Is it true to the playwright's concept? How will it fit into the tempo of direction?"

Romantic as the process may seem, we have reason to believe that the results obtained by this process are sounder, not only from the standpoint of dramatic art but also from that of the original words and meaning, than the standard literary translations. Recently while working on the American version of a modern French play, this strange fact was brought home to us. We had a copy of the French original, a copy of a German director's script, and an English translator's manuscript. The English translator had tried to follow the French source closely, translating grammatically, using dictionary meanings of the French phrases—not without some rather ludicrous blunders. Inasmuch as the Austrian collaborator had directed this play in Vienna, we started to make an American play from the German translation. Naturally, we found many differences when we compared with the English version. But, upon comparing with the French original, we found that our method of theater-translation (even when a scene had gone first into a free German adaptation, from there into rough English before being set down in an American adaptation) produced dialogue closest to the French original in both meaning and emotional content.

The explanation is simply that a top-rank playwright has used the only possible words, given this scene, these characters, this period and locale, and a certain desired emotional effect. Competent directors and translators, understanding the scene, the characters, and the desired emotional effect, will find the only words capable of producing the artist's meaning. Naturally, the process is limited to the work of good playwrights, for only they will use the right words to convey the mood and dramatic tension their themes require. If they fall short consistently, then the translators will be writing something other than the original play. It may be better for certain scenes, but the result will be failure because no translator can be expected to write plots and create character. He can only transmute what has been created, and check from a theatrical viewpoint the consistency of characterization and plot in each scene.

Gerhart Hauptmann's *Hannele's Way to Heaven* may be used to illustrate specific problems such as may arise from any one drama. This is a "dream play" which passes in fluidic way from reality to dream and back again. In this poetic fantasy the greatest stress had

to be placed on the correct tempo and rhythm, and also upon the proper transmutation of Silesian folk speech into an unlocalized American equivalent. There is an especial difficulty in attempting folk speech for *Hannele* because the play must retain a universality and yet needs the unaffected simplicity of the common tongue. Every class of person, and therefore every stratum of language, figures in this drama. The types range from the paupers, thieves, and prostitutes to the policeman, magistrate, doctor, schoolmaster, and finally the pure poetry of Christ and the angels. Any good translator must represent each social class with a different speech rhythm and of course a different vocabulary. The translator must avoid bookish language, be less interested in a literary translation than in an emotional one, and not forget that *Hannele's Way to Heaven* is a poetic play, not a dramatic poem.

An example of comparative results can be seen in the famous lines of the schoolmaster who in *Hannele's* dream seems to be Christ. In the usual published translation,³ the Stranger speaks to *Hannele*:

Thy shame I take from thee. I fill thine eyes with everlasting light. Thy soul shall be all sunshine. Eternal brightness shall be thine, from dawn till eve and then till dawn again. Receive all radiant things, and feast thine eyes on all the glories of the deep blue sea and azure sky and fair green trees, forever and forever. Let thine ears be opened to the music of the millions upon millions of God's angels. Thus do I loose thy stammering tongue and quicken it with the life of thine own soul and my soul and the soul of God Almighty. With these thy tears I cleanse thee from the dust and stain of earth. I will raise thee high above the stars of God.

One outstanding criticism is against the "preacher's tone," with its antiquated stiltedness and sentimentality. Another is against the weak endings of lines which should be strong. A third is against the impersonal nature of the whole speech, certainly not designed to reassure a frightened, sick little girl. Hauptmann intended no such character.

Our student actor could not make that speech either rhythmical or dramatic, but was more fortunate with a translation made according to the principles of emotional interpretation.

³ Charles Henry Meltzer, *Dramatic Works of Gerhart Hauptmann* (B. W. Huebsch, 1914).

I take your lowliness from you. I touch your eyes with eternal light. Be filled with the light of the sun forever. Be filled from dawning to setting sun, and from eve to morn again. Be filled through all eternity with radiance: the blue of the sea, blue of the sky, and green crest of the grass. To your ears I bring the sound of millions of angels in the million heavens of God. I release your stammering tongue, and let it reveal your soul and my soul and the soul of Almighty God. With these tears I wash clean your soul from this earth's pain and soil. I shall lead your feet beyond the heavenly stars.

Hannele would have been afraid to go with a preaching, pompous, sanctimonious character who talks like a radio pastor, carefully keeping her in the passive mood. She found in the Stranger of the second translation a kindly, simple person who addresses her directly and gently—just like the good Schoolmaster. His speech has the simple beauty Hauptmann intended and the definite rhythms an actor needs. She goes with him up a staircase lined with angels, and only her body remains on the pallet, only the doctor may say: "She is dead!"

ARTICULATION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL AND THE COLLEGE¹

WARNER G. RICE²

It was during the early thirties, in the blackest of the depression years, that many of us teaching English in the colleges and universities first became actively aware of the need for making a closer connection between our work and that of the secondary schools. Very likely this is one of the patches of silver lining in a very dark cloud! The situation which we faced was this: our enrolments were holding up, indeed more students than before were coming to us; but, from our point of view at least, many of them seemed very badly prepared, and a great number were looking in new directions—making new demands upon our courses in English.

¹ Read before a general session of the National Council of Teachers of English in New York City, November, 1939.

² Professor of English, University of Michigan; the elected chairman of the College Section of the National Council of Teachers of English.

It was largely in order to deal with these fresh problems, as well as with others of long standing, that the Michigan Committee on the Articulation of High School and College English began its work in the year 1934-35. This committee included in its membership twelve teachers of English from the Michigan public schools and an equal number of teachers of elementary courses in composition and literature from the university. The inquiries and deliberations of this group were extensive and thorough; and as a result of them there appeared, in the spring of 1935, a university bulletin with the title *Preparation for College English*—a pamphlet designed “to present in as clear and concrete a form as possible what is expected in English of an entering freshman at the University of Michigan. It [was] prepared on the assumption that a high-school student who is looking forward to college has a right to know all that can be known of the standard of attainment to which he will be asked to measure up when he enters his freshman classes. It [was] prepared, also, with the idea that a clearer definition of aims and standards [would] enable both the high schools and the University to carry on their work with greater continuity and effectiveness, and in the end with much more economy of effort.” Proceeding on the supposition that the statement of the North Central Association respecting entrance requirements in English had been “generally adopted . . . but less used than is desirable,” the compilers of *Preparation for College English* first reprinted and analyzed the North Central Association’s report, especially emphasizing these points:

1. That in the opinion of the Committee on Articulation, the Association’s recommendation that four years of training in English beyond the eighth grade should be given “in certain cases” ought to be extended to all students preparing for college, in view of “the basic importance of English as a tool for the mastery of other subjects.”
2. That training in literature and composition should not be given in “widely separated courses” but should be continued together throughout the six or eight terms in which English is studied. For only in this way, the committee felt, can the student’s capacity to use language well be adequately developed.
3. That both competence—i.e., the successful communication of thought—and decency—i.e., a reasonable proficiency in grammatical, idiomatic forms of expression and the mastery of the mechanics of writing—are necessary.
4. That mastery of the essential grammatical and rhetorical terms and prin-

ciples is requisite: "mastery" meaning a thorough knowledge of fundamentals and the capacity to apply them rather than the mere ability to name and to define. In the interests of concreteness the Michigan group undertook to name in its statement those principles and to specify those terms which a college freshman should thoroughly understand.

5. That inasmuch as letter-writing is the chief form of literary activity pursued by most persons after graduation, its conventions should be taught, and students given practice in it.
6. That teachers of English have a direct responsibility for the training of their pupils to speak well, to attain proficiency in oral reading and in oral composition.
7. That accurate reading—the elementary problem of getting meaning from the printed page—should be stressed.
8. That though a knowledge of the "development and continuity of English and American literature" is desirable, history, chronology, biography, etc., should be taught incidentally and should never be more than supplementary to the literature itself.
9. That literary forms should be made a part of the familiar knowledge of high-school graduates.
10. That students should be required, as a part of their training in literature, to memorize a considerable amount of poetry.

To begin with last things first, it may at once be said that the recommendations made with respect to literature, both by the North Central Association and by the Committee on Articulation, and the treatment of this subject in *Preparation for College English*, are less thoroughgoing and satisfactory than what is said with respect to composition. In the light of our recent experience at the university we should now, I am certain, want to underline more heavily the requirements that pupils be disciplined to read understandingly and that they keep principally to the discussion of texts—to the literature itself—inasmuch as our doubts concerning the value of literary history as it is likely to be taught in high schools increases daily. Though we now still agree with the statement in *Preparation for College English* that instruction "in English classes would be much more successful, and that the ends of economy and efficiency would both be better served, if our students came to us with something like uniform preparation," we should probably want to present a different sort of reading list from that provided in the bulletin—a list better accommodated to the needs and interests of high-school students and one not including such titles as Dryden's *MacFlecknoe*,

Arnold's *Essay on Wordsworth*, or Holmes's *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*.

As far as our articulation program concerns the teaching of literature, then, a good deal remains to be done, though we are making some efforts in this direction which I shall mention incidentally later. So far our main endeavor has been made with respect to composition. It was for the purpose of making clear its interpretation of the proper standards for high-school and college writing that the Articulation Committee devoted a good many pages in its pamphlet to the presentation of "examples of themes written by entering freshmen, rated according to their acceptability with an analysis showing the bases upon which the ratings were made." Each theme thus reproduced was read and criticized by "twelve representative instructors in the University English department, ranging from the rank of full professor to that of teaching fellow. . . . The judgment expressed in each case may therefore be regarded as reflecting the standards not only of the group of twelve instructors who joined in the project, but of the English department as a whole." In order to show how the opinions of the twelve readers were guided toward some sort of uniformity the somewhat elaborate set of criteria made up by the central committee was reprinted in full. In all, twelve impromptu themes—in a variety of styles and of widely different degrees of merit—and one long theme prepared outside class are presented in the pamphlet, with facsimile pages showing the actual corrections and comments of some of the instructors.

It was this feature of the bulletin which proved especially interesting and useful when copies of *Preparation for College English* were distributed among the high schools of the state; and it was in continuation of the service thus begun—a service emphasizing the actual appraisal of particular pieces of composition—that the articulation project was initiated by the department of English at the university. This project, under the general direction of Professor C. D. Thorpe, was carried on vigorously in 1935-36, in 1936-37, was suspended for two years because of lack of funds, and has been revived in 1939-40. It now operates on the departmental budget, where, in a time of financial stress, money has been found for it because of its

obvious usefulness and importance. The plan, to quote the letter of explanation sent out to the institutions invited to participate, was designed "to make available to a selected group of high schools a consultant in English. This consultant is a member of the Department of English at the University; he has also had varied experience in high-school English. He will, at the request of teachers in co-operating schools, analyze and evaluate any written work submitted, in terms of its fitness to meet University standards for entering freshmen. Under this plan teachers may submit representative papers at the beginning of the year, or at any later period, and receive the opinion of the consultant upon any matter connected with them. Questions of procedure in dealing with the writers of given papers, as well as questions of specific quality will be dealt with. The consultant will in every way possible interpret to the schools the ideals, attitudes, and practices of the University English Department."

At the outset two, and then later three, consultants were appointed. A list of Michigan high schools, selected so as to represent different districts and different classes (small schools, large schools, urban schools, country schools) was made up, and six schools from outside the state were added as "controls." In practice it was found that each consultant, working on a third-time basis, could handle the material submitted by from fifteen to twenty teachers. The English staff of each of the co-operating schools was asked to send in about a score of student themes, selected so as to give a fair sampling of the work of the English classes. When these papers arrived at the university they were carefully read and appraised, most of them being examined and discussed by all the consultants. Comments were then prepared and attached to the individual themes, and the lots were returned whence they came. In addition, letters containing observations and criticisms relating to each batch as a whole were sent to the teachers concerned, many of whom had previously made up group judgments of the themes submitted.

A consecutive reading of some dozens of these comments would show, I believe, that the consultants as a group have adhered to standards that are remarkably constant. It should be made clear, however, that agreement upon these standards was developed largely

through careful consideration of the evidence that came in the high-school papers read—that is, they were not established on a priori considerations. At Michigan we have come to believe, partly through a reading of these themes, that pupils in the eleventh and twelfth grades should be warned away from fine writing, extravagant fantasy, high-flown rhetoric, and kept to subjects within the range of their common experiences, about which they know something and about which they should be expected to write clearly, accurately, and logically. We have been fortified by the evidence of the high-school papers in our determination to insist upon this kind of training in our elementary courses in college composition too; and this view, which seems to have at least modesty, clarity, and unpretentiousness to recommend it, has been kept not only before the members of our staff of freshman instructors but also before their older colleagues through the medium of department meetings and by other expedients—certainly not to the detriment of our teaching generally.

The work of our consultants has been rewarded by grateful and (to us) gratifying letters from many of the high schools which sent in student themes. One principal writes:

I am indeed favorably impressed by the co-operative experiment conducted by the English Department of the University. I was greatly pleased with your analysis of the samples of composition which we sent. Your plans for conducting the project another year meet with my hearty approval.

We shall have compositions from our senior classes to submit to you this semester as early as possible. Most of our long themes are not required until we are well along in the semester of work, but we shall get them in as early as possible, so that both pupils and teachers may benefit from your criticism. . . .

Another letter, this time from a teacher, reads in part as follows:

Your careful criticism of my 11th grade papers proved so interesting to my 12th grade classes that they begged me to send you some of their work. . . .

For several years we have tried to give our seniors some experience in thesis writing. They follow a procedure outlined in their text, with drill on hunting down material, taking notes on cards, organizing an outline, etc., the teacher checking the work at each stage. I allow them to correlate this work with that done in other courses, if they wish, and I permit any who use a typewriter to type the final draft.

We should like your opinion as to whether this is a useful type of assignment for those preparing for college.

In some of the letters there was perhaps too much in the way of appreciation and praise and less than we should have liked in the way of discussion, questions, and comments upon the principles which the consultants were employing; but proof that the service offered had really proved useful has certainly not been wanting. Some schools, after one batch had been returned, sent in second sets of papers. Some groups of teachers reported results obtained when they had read and discussed together the themes before they were dispatched and had carefully reviewed their composite opinions after the papers were returned. In a few cases the consultants were invited to visit the classes from which the themes had come, so that they could see at nearer view just how the teaching was done and so that they could talk over with the entire high-school English staff methods and procedures and special problems. This visiting proved extremely helpful to all concerned. Misunderstandings and misconceptions are bound to disappear when teachers meet face to face, and many things can be frankly said across a table which cannot be set down in writing without some risk of misconstruction.

By these beginnings further developments of the correlation plan have been prepared for. Since it has been realized from the start that the usefulness of statements concerning college English would be considerably increased if they could represent the views held not at the University of Michigan only but also by colleges throughout the state, a revision of *Preparation for College English* is now being carried forward under the supervision of Professor C. D. Thorpe, who has been, from the first, the chief guiding spirit of the enterprise. Professors Wells of Michigan, Euwema of Michigan State, Hanawalt of Wayne, Limpus of State Teachers College, and McClinchey of Central State Teachers College have been appointed to serve as a central committee and representatives of more than two-thirds of the thirty institutions of collegiate rank in the state have agreed to participate. High-school teachers will also be asked to aid, and it is expected that the new pamphlet will be ready for publication by next summer.

And thus I make the transition from what has been, and is being, done to what remains still to be accomplished. One desideratum which we clearly see is the extension of the correlation plan so that

it will be useful to a greater degree and to a larger number of secondary schools. We have so far dealt, at one time or another, with perhaps a hundred and fifty institutions. But we have not been able to follow up our recommendations thoroughly in the great majority of cases; we have not been able to test the value of our advice by working with the same schools over a period of several years. Nor have we been able to accommodate as many schools as would like to send in papers for our consultants' appraisal. Our staff is adequate; but, as in so many good causes, sufficient money to finance our project on a larger scale is lacking. Up to the present the university has paid all expenses, at times appropriating as much as thirty-five hundred dollars annually to cover them. Even more than this would be required, however, if we were to do all that we think desirable; and perhaps the only way to meet the difficulty is to ask the schools being served to contribute something (for instance, ten dollars per set of papers sent in) toward the cost of having the reading done. I hope that it is not ungenerous to remark that if such payments were made there might be an even closer scrutiny of our consultants' reports and an even deeper interest in them than has been manifested so far. I suspect, too, that our endeavors would be more freely criticized. At any rate, the charging of a fee appears at present the only way by which we can make our consultants available to all the teachers or schools that wish to call upon them for aid. Our university is an accrediting institution, sending out visitors on frequent tours of inspection to the secondary schools. We wish it were possible for these visitors to suggest, whenever they find classes where English is unskilfully taught and wherever they meet English teachers who ask for professional advice and guidance, that the consultants working on the correlation project stand ready to do what they can. We think, moreover, that the only really satisfactory arrangement is to have our consultants visit, in every case, the schools whose products they judge and to have them talk frankly with high-school teachers about both composition and literature. This scheme is by no means impracticable; but the details of its operation can scarcely be of interest here.

For the present and until our consultants can go regularly to the schools, our English department will continue to encourage high-

school teachers to visit the university to see what is going on there. At present we arrange several programs during the course of each academic year, invite all who are interested to visit university classes in English, and discuss with these visitors in general and in specific detail our aims and methods and the problems which have to be solved in the secondary schools. We held a series of such meetings during our last summer session also and had an average attendance of more than a hundred teachers at each. So far, to be sure, we have made no definite attempt to see that representatives from schools co-operating in the correlation project attend these gatherings; but such attendance by teachers who send in papers to us might well be strongly urged, if not actually required. Certainly we make progress most quickly and happily after we have come to know one another.

Again—though this is no part of our responsibility—we should like to see the correlation plan extended to the work of other departments—mathematics, history, foreign languages. Nor are some of these departments unwilling to undertake something of the sort; they are held back only by the scarcity of funds, which may yet be forthcoming. Meanwhile, if we can do little directly to insure the participation of other departmental groups, we can at least see that there is a wide participation by the members of our own staff, so that many can see and learn and understand. Lately, one of our consultants has made plans which will put eight or ten sets of high-school themes in the hands of an equal number of our teachers of freshmen for their study and appraisal. The extra burden will not fall heavily upon any one of them, and they will find out many things which they will be able to apply immediately in their teaching. And their discoveries will be communicated to others, since the results of their reading will be analyzed and reviewed at one of our staff meetings.

In these ways, then, and with these plans in mind, we continue along the lines which we have laid down, not very spectacularly, it may be, but steadily and energetically. On the whole, we feel that we are making satisfactory progress. I conclude by reading a statement of our objectives borrowed from a letter written by Professor Thorpe in 1937.

[We wish to meet a need by] furnishing sufficiently definite information to give the high school teacher a working basis for meeting the demands of the University in specific subjects. Our articulation project grew out of requests from the high schools for such definite information. . . . We felt that the thing we wanted could not be achieved through any system of pre-college tests. We wanted a plan that not only would show, as specifically as we were able, what the University regarded as adequate preparation in English, but also would be of aid in establishing better methods of attaining this preparation in secondary schools. We wanted some sort of real co-operative effort in which the schools could join with us in working toward definite ends.

PROBLEMS OF ARTICULATION IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH

DORA V. SMITH¹

Early efforts to bring about articulation between the various levels of the school system were confined largely to the juggling of subject matter and the apportioning of topics to the different years of the elementary and secondary school. Like the eccentric architect of Swift's kingdom of the scientists, we began our building at the roof. Committees composed almost entirely of college and university authorities presented their requirements, and the necessary prerequisites were fitted into the schedules of the preparatory schools. Lists of required books, topics for linguistic study, and the like emanated from the colleges, and the high schools incorporated them into their programs. In the early years of the twentieth century a specific-response psychology aided the cause of listing specifics of language without which one could not hope to achieve fluency in the use of the mother-tongue and individual literary selections, acquaintance with which was deemed necessary to the acquisition of genuine culture. Unlike the great definitions of culture in the annals of philosophy, which associate it chiefly with a quality of thought or feeling, an attitude of mind, or a capacity¹ for growth, these prescriptions

¹ Professor of education, University of Minnesota; editor of literature texts, and English expert in the National Survey of Secondary Education and the New York State survey.

attempted to confine it within the boundaries of specific ground to be covered or items to be checked off in the program of literature and expression.

Complicating this situation came the change in high-school enrolment, which increased 1900 per cent between 1890 and 1930, while the population as a whole increased less than 100 per cent. The greatest gains came in the upper years, for pupils stayed in school on the average of three and one-half years longer in 1934 than they had done in 1900. In 1890 high-school pupils represented largely professional and clerical classes. Today an influx of boys and girls from laboring and industrial groups makes our enrolment more truly representative of the population as a whole. In 1890 four-fifths of the pupils in high school were preparing directly for college. Now only one pupil in seven has such an ambition.

In terms of variety of educational objectives, in terms of native ability, and still more in relation to the quality of background which the pupil brings to the understanding and appreciation of literature or to the acquisition of power in speech and writing, the problem is an overpowering one for teachers of English at all levels of instruction—in the elementary school, in the junior high school, in the senior high school, and in the college and university. All of us face the same questions. What is best for the individual student? What ends should education serve at our particular level of the school system? Why do we not get the results we so earnestly desire?

Of special significance from this point of view are the youth studies recently produced by the American Youth Commission, the National Youth Administration, and the New York Regents' Inquiry. Sociologists tell us that the average time of initial self-support in this country has increased within the last twenty years from fifteen years of age to twenty-five. Young people are staying in school as an alternative for hanging about the streets or as a means of preparation for more inviting vocational opportunities. Society recognizes the importance of these years for mental health, for the establishment of social attitudes, for the development of personal resources, and for preparation for vocational efficiency. Immediately the question becomes not primarily one of making each level of the school

system fit into the program of the next but one of bringing all of them into line with the continuous progress of the individual.

That is why the problem of articulation begins with the establishment of a philosophy of education which centers attention upon the growth of the pupil and not upon the attainment of standards set from without. How to adapt instruction so that *growth* may be continuous and uninterrupted for the pupils who will terminate their period of formal education the moment they attain the leaving age, and at the same time provide similar continuity of experience for those who are capable of stimulation to higher things, is a major problem of the secondary school today.

It is obvious, also, that each level of the school system has its own peculiar responsibility for meeting the needs of pupils during one particular stage of their development. It is incumbent upon each one, therefore, first of all to study its own pupils and their needs—and not to give primary consideration to the standards of the institution higher up. This does not mean that if such standards are reasonable, as in many instances they are, both cannot be adequately done for pupils of average ability or above. I believe they can be; but conditions prevail in some school systems which indicate that both the nature and the needs of boys and girls are forgotten in an effort to secure the approbation of those who direct instruction in the institution to which these pupils will be promoted. In one community, I visited a junior high school teacher who was spending three days in the seventh grade teaching metonymy and synecdoche in preparation for junior college days. She expressed great satisfaction with the specific nature of the requests from above, which made it perfectly clear to her just what she should do next. In another town in the Northwest, a head of the English Department in the senior high school told me with exultation that his troubles were over because he had succeeded in getting his wife made head of the English department in the junior high school, and she would see to it that what his teachers wanted was taught. Wholesale elimination and retardation often result from such a program, which puts emphasis upon logical development of subject matter rather than upon the continuous growth of the pupil. Under circumstances like these,

there is grave danger that smoothness of transition may be achieved in so narrow an area that powers essential to ultimate success in college fail to result even for the superior group.

It is undoubtedly true also that, if continuity of growth is to be attained for individual pupils, each division of the school system has a definite responsibility for emphasizing certain aspects of instruction primarily because they will *not* be required by the institution higher up. In the English program, speech at the high-school level is a case in point, for the speech problems of everyday life have fundamental importance for the adolescent, and consideration will not be given them in connection with higher education in the average college or university in America today.

Recent studies of child development have brought to the fore two significant aspects of the problem, namely, that growth, when it occurs, is continuous, and that it proceeds at different rates for different individuals. The other day I heard two mothers anxiously discussing the peculiarities of growth exhibited by their fourteen-month-old babies. One was disturbed because her son was not yet walking although he had most of his teeth. The doctor had reassured her by saying that boys are usually slower than girls in walking and that if her son had consumed all of his energy in growing teeth she could not expect him to walk as soon as a child who had no teeth. Immediately the second mother evinced considerable relief, for her fourteen-month-old daughter had no teeth at all, but was running, she said, "all over the place." Who shall say what is the minimum essential of physical development for fourteen months? Is it having teeth or is it ability to walk? Whichever we choose, we may do irreparable harm to one of these children.

If these principles hold in the more obvious realm of the physical, how much more do they affect, in finely differentiated manner, the intricate mental and social adjustments required in the use of language. For language problems recur as one goes through life. They change with successive stages of development and with the different circumstances under which one meets them from year to year. Ability to talk in complete sentences is one thing in the third grade and a totally different thing in the seventh grade or in the twelfth, as complexities of thought and experience completely alter the char-

acter of the sentences which give expression to them. It is evident that every teacher at every level of instruction from the first grade through the graduate school has a responsibility for dealing with that problem in the circumstances in which his students use language and in relationship to the particular stage of their mental development at the moment.

Smooth articulation is attained not primarily through the checking-off of items for mastery or the setting-up of hurdles to be jumped by all pupils at a given moment in their experience with language but rather by careful attention at all levels of instruction to the needed next steps for the pupils concerned, in order that growth for them may be continuous and uninterrupted.

Before turning to some specific examples of what schools are doing or may do in connection with this difficult problem, let us consider a recent movement in education which complicates especially the task of those who would set fixed standards of attainment for all pupils at a given level of the school program. I refer to the policy, forced upon the schools by the influx of pupils of a lower social and intellectual level, of promoting from one grade to another or from one level of the school system to another pupils whose stage of maturity indicates that they will derive more benefit from such promotion than they would from detention in the lower class. Such a policy plays havoc with any attempt to set minimum requirements in attainment of language and reading goals from grade to grade. The general idea is exceedingly alarming to one schooled in the theory of set standards of performance for everybody. Yet when one examines the plight of individual pupils, he cannot fail to give assent to the policy.

For example, I watched three overgrown farm boys awaiting a sixteenth birthday to release them from school forever, lolling over their desks in the back of a one-room rural school, where they had sat for three years while the bus went daily past the door, carrying their friends to the village high school, where courses in agriculture and in the manual arts furnished an opportunity for growth in areas fundamental to their future development—and all because they could not underline dependent clauses and indicate verbs in the passive voice, or explain the old-fashioned poetical phrases in

Holmes's "The Last Leaf," as set for examination by state and local authorities charged with the responsibility of determining which pupils were "ready" to go on to the senior high school and which were not. So sat these boys, while the younger children engaged in challenging activities suited to their level of development, still confronted after three years with the parts of speech and the function of clauses, still contemplating the "mossy marbles" and the "prest lips." Such examinations are maintained in the name of articulation; yet what they do, in many instances, is to place insurmountable obstacles in the way of the *continuous growth* for which policies of articulation exist—growth not only in wide areas of experience outside of English but in the very language and reading functions we wish most sincerely to promote.

On the other hand, it is obvious that merely passing these pupils on to the higher school and asking them to attempt the same tasks of an academic nature as are presented to their fellows, who may be years ahead of them in language and reading power, will not facilitate their continuous growth in English and may so limit the opportunities offered to those of higher abilities as to present a serious problem for both groups of pupils. Articulation for these overage pupils demands a special program removed from abstractions, concentrated upon the language and reading problems they face at the moment, and integrated with the situations and experiences in which they will use language and read books.

At the same time the need for holding capable students to a high level of performance in reading and in speech and writing is greater than it ever was, as intricate social problems demand more and more intelligent leadership from those capable of grappling with them. Although for many boys and girls of average ability who are now continuing into higher institutions the present college standards are too high and too academic, so that colleges and universities are trying to provide general education better suited to them, for others, both high school and college will maintain high standards of achievement in exact and effective habits of speech and writing and will challenge their powers with literary courses of a more specialized character.

From the point of view of practical supervision, it seems to me,

therefore, that the first step in any attack upon problems of articulation must begin with a definition of the philosophy of education which any school system as a whole wishes to adopt. There are many curriculum committees at work in the country engaged in a more or less wooden exercise called listing objectives of the teaching of English, which have little or no meaning for the teachers concerned. Others begin their committee procedures with setting down those elements of technical English they think each pupil should master in each grade of the elementary or secondary school. Then there is trouble when disagreement sets in.

Perhaps a more normal approach would be to attempt to set down in writing the changes such teachers would like to bring about in these boys and girls or the kinds of attitudes and abilities they would like to foster in them. The answer to those questions lies in the needs of the individual and in the needs of society—more directly, in the needs of the pupils these teachers meet every day, and in the uses of English important in the life of the community in which they live. Study of these aspects of one's own school and community takes time, and development of a particular philosophy of education among teachers is a slow process.

The second necessity in any program for the study of articulation is utilization of all available research. I venture to say that no lasting curriculum can be made in high-school or college English in the next ten years that does not take cognizance of the recent youth studies which have revealed so clearly what the high school owes to boys and girls. In the field of the curriculum in both reading and language, research has been busy for the last twenty years producing significant evidence of the suitability of various aspects of the English program for the needs of youth. The same thing is true in the field of the psychology of learning as it is related to problems of the attainment of outcomes in reading and expression. No curriculum committee can proceed far without discovering violent disagreements among its members as to what is the best material for teaching and what are the best methods of attaining proficiency in the ends desired. The 'Tis-'Taint method of argument is beneath the dignity of the scholar at any level of instruction. Only as we seek to utilize all the scientific evidence available, acquaint our curricu-

lum committees with it, and set them investigating for themselves in areas as yet unexplored or left in the realm of dispute, can we hope to find any lasting solutions for the problem of articulation.

For years educators throughout the country have been grappling with practical aspects of the problem. Some general principles evolve from the body of evidence and discussion available in print and from observation and consultation with those at work in the schools.

The first is this, that emphasis upon habits and powers to be attained makes for greater progress in mutual understanding among teachers at different levels of instruction than the attempt to prescribe ground to be covered—concentration that is upon ends to be achieved rather than upon means to be used. For example, everyone wants pupils at all levels of instruction to write more correctly and more effectively than they do—to write sentences that are complete, and clear, and forceful in expression. Can we not agree that we shall concentrate on that problem as a part of every course, testing the results in terms of how complete, clear, and forceful are the sentences pupils actually write, and leaving the means by which that end is achieved to the individual teacher or level of the school system?

The same emphasis upon ends rather than means in the field of literature would lead to a consideration of reading power and maturity rather than enumeration of titles to be read. How extensive is the range of reading which pupils have done in high school? What challenge has it presented as far as quality and maturity of reading are concerned? How much power of reflection has it engendered? What attitudes toward books has it stimulated in the young people concerned? Again, the recent emphasis of the College Entrance Examination Board upon these elements rather than upon specific books to be tested is suggestive to curriculum-makers everywhere. In the same way, colleges of the West and Middle West are tending to incorporate into their placement programs comprehensive objective tests in the field of literature which reveal the applicant's general acquaintance with three hundred different books. The fact that such measures as these have proved more closely correlated with success in college English than previous narrowly restricted examinations testing intensive study

of a few set books should greatly encourage those grappling with problems of college preparation in undifferentiated classes.

Studies of articulation show that difficulties of successful transfer from elementary to high school or from high school to college are due as frequently to lack of proper habits of work as to failure in the matter of materials covered. For example, the amount of responsibility for themselves and their work which is required of pupils increases with each level of the school system. Teachers in the upper years of each may well introduce their students to those techniques of study and assignment which are common in the institution higher up. Long-time assignments with personal responsibility for the budgeting of one's own study program, use of reference materials, note-taking from a variety of sources and organization of related ideas into a well-unified whole, ability to take notes at a lecture—these are skills to which high-school seniors may well be introduced whether they are going to college or not. It is equally important also that teachers in the first year of the new school or college acquaint themselves with the techniques of instruction common in the lower school and see to it that the induction of pupils into new methods of learning and of study is gradual and carefully planned with their limitations in mind.

More and more recognition is being given to the necessity of conferences between teachers of contiguous sections of the school system. Transmission of personnel folders with detailed records of what pupils have done in the school below, and ultimate reports of how well they have succeeded in schools higher up, are becoming increasingly common. Such records involve scholarship, character traits, level of intelligence, and health. Most well-organized school systems today have such records transmitted from grade to grade in their own schools, and many colleges now require them from schools sending students for entrance to the freshman class. In the Eight-Year Study of the Progressive Education Association there have been included in such folders lists of the books read by the pupil during his high-school course and samples of his composition work from year to year. Another very valuable experiment in the Eight-Year Study has been the calling-together for conference in weeks preceding the opening of the college year both the high-school teachers whose

pupils have asked admission to college and the instructors in freshman English into whose classes these pupils will go. The purpose is to allow the high-school teachers to explain what has been emphasized in the program of college preparation in lieu of the usual prerequisites and to give instructors in freshman English an opportunity to furnish later counsel on the basis of results attained *in the achievement of the objectives agreed upon by the two groups at the beginning of the experiment.*

The University of Michigan has developed a most complete system of counseling high-school teachers of prospective college students.² The English department of the University of Minnesota, too, has prepared a scale of compositions showing the level of ability in writing considered of passing quality, of superior quality, and of unsatisfactory quality in the course in freshman English. Teachers and pupils in high school may discover through the study of it what level of attainment in composition must be achieved by one who wishes to succeed in college English.

As pointed out by Dr. O. J. Campbell and his associates in *The Teaching of College English*, the value of such programs of counseling and articulation depends in large measure upon the extent to which both high-school and college instructors in English have united in the preparation of the standards set. The purpose of any such movement is not to give one institution a chance to make known its wants to another but to give both of them an opportunity to study co-operatively the stage of development reached by the pupil and the reasonable next step in standards.

Perhaps too great stress cannot be laid upon this aspect of the program in articulation. No custom is more common at every level of instruction than to place blame for pupil deficiencies in English upon the teachers lower down. "If we didn't have to teach what they should have been taught in the junior high school, we might get something done!" This kind of remark occurs with equal frequency at the junior and senior high level and among college instructors in each successive year of the course.

A doctoral dissertation on freshman English which has just come

² See p. 136 of this issue of the *Journal*.

out of the University of Nebraska shows that students grouped in subfreshmen English in the university had ten times as many failures in high-school English as had pupils in the superior group. And after a term of instruction, 50 per cent of them failed again. Such evidence indicates that the teachers at the two levels of instruction were not far apart in their judgments of the achievement of these pupils. Certainly, the situation does not suggest that the results are due to the fact that either group of teachers took its teaching responsibilities lightly.

The more one studies the actual problems of English in the present situation in American high schools the more he feels that continuous use of the classroom period for lesson hearing alone or for concentration of all pupils upon a single body of material must be modified, if the problems of articulation are to be solved for pupils of widely differing objectives and abilities. Laboratory techniques, small-group conferences, and organization of work over longer periods of time with pupils responsible for their own progress, would seem to be essential if individual needs are to be met—with participation by the entire class at intervals during certain days of the week for purposes of stimulation and sharing of experience.

Problems of articulation, therefore, demand careful study of each individual and his needs so that continuity of growth may be assured for all the pupils of the school. It necessitates primarily concentration not upon the requirements which each school in turn would set up as prerequisite for success in its own program but actual study of pupil growth and the subordination of courses of study and standards of passing or failing to the fundamental needs of young people at each succeeding stage of their development.

SELF-EXPLORATION IN CREATIVE WRITING

PEARL HOGREFE¹

What do we expect creative writing to do for our students? Why are they writing? That is, perhaps, the fundamental question.

Teachers and the students themselves have various answers to the question. Many of them say that the purpose is to develop skill in the use of language and in techniques for special types of writing, or to increase their appreciation of literature.

At Iowa State College we accept either of these answers as valid in part; but we believe also that students write to develop themselves mentally and emotionally—to understand themselves, other people, and their own social environment; to discover their own urges and basic satisfactions; to find an emotional adjustment or an integration of personality; or to build a personal philosophy from discovering their own values. In the stuff of their own vital experience students find the material for this development. In an honest creative process they discover the means of the development: they test the significance of their material with their minds; they shape it into an artistic unit with their sensory perceptions and emotions. Genuine creation is activity in which they are changing and growing—achieving self-development.

Thus creative writing, when it begins with the exploring of self and communicates authentic experience with integrity, becomes one means to an education which draws out inner powers, not an amusement for idle moments, and not a mere rest from serious studies. At the same time it is better writing, with authentic details, characters who come to life, genuine emotion which lives in the writer and communicates itself to the reader, even with an organic growth in style, limited, of course, by the student's capacity.

Interesting amateur writing, we think, like nearly all great literature, is in some way autobiography, based upon self-exploration and

¹ Associate professor of English in Iowa State College; joint editor of a textbook, *Interpreting Experience*; author of *Renewal*, a book of poems; now preparing a book on creative writing.

developed with authentic feeling. Even *Gulliver's Travels*, according to Thomas Wolfe, is autobiography; and Wolfe's own novels were based upon a passionate and a thorough exploring of self. Granting that Wolfe lacked integration and self-discipline, his greatest power came from his ability to use his own experience.

Believing in self-exploration, we use these four means to achieve it: first, sets of questions for the student; second, his continuous use of the informal diary; third, the teacher's help in seeing the potential value in his bits of raw material; fourth, the co-operation of student and teacher in the personal conference.

The sets of questions must not, we think, be too mechanical or mathematical. They direct a student's mind to his past, his present, and his future, glancing briefly at all phases of his life and giving him a start on work he must continue for himself. Here are examples from many possibilities: What sensory details (sight, sound, touch, taste, odor) call up for you memories of the past? What specific memories? What sensory details have brought you aversion or pleasure in the last few weeks? What did you enjoy most in early childhood, in grade school, in high school? What did you dislike most? What troubles and fears did you have at these same periods? What experience in your whole life has made you most sad?

Besides the preceding questions on sensory detail and personal emotion other lists may stimulate thinking about settings, people, emotionalized ideas: What place do you remember because it is associated with former carefree days, past happiness or sorrow, a former grandeur or a mystery? What place would you like most to see now? Have you ever been miserable in a place because it was too clean and neat? Hated a place because it was too clean and neat? Hated a place because it was too quiet? Because it restricted your desire to develop? Are you familiar with city, town, country? With the United States? With a certain part of the United States? With foreign countries? With prairie, mountains, river, forest, sea? With factory, office, store? Home, school, college? Hospital, church, club?

Whom did you admire most in early childhood, in the grades, in high school? Whom did you dislike or fear? Whom do you admire most now? Dislike or fear most? With whom do you get along best—father or mother, a brother or sister, another relative? What per-

son has been the greatest influence on you for good? For bad? What individual have you seen acting under the dominance of courage, cowardice, stubbornness, greed, patience, loyalty, dishonesty, stinginess, determination, stupidity, superstition, provincialism, pride? (Name one person for each trait if you can.) What individual have you seen in conflict with physical environment? Social environment? Religious or racial environment?

In your family, what basic attitude to morals has prevailed? To religion? To work? To the use of money? What principles do you recognize as your personal philosophy? Or what principles can you discover? What things have given you your greatest satisfactions in the past? What things could give you your greatest possible satisfaction in the future? What is the most important problem you have ever had to solve? On what principle or basis did you solve it?

After beginning with some questions like these as helps, a student may continue his own exploration by means of an informal diary. He is not concerned with mere fact; but he jots down, preferably each day, or at frequent intervals, sensory details, settings, people, situations, moods, and ideas, especially those which record his inner growth. He values sensory details because they interpret human experience, and emotionalized ideas because they may come to life in authentic pictures. Creative work frequently includes these three processes: observing individual details, generalizing from them, finding or creating individual details to communicate the general truth. Hence the student's power to use his potential subjects will depend on his power to transfer—to see significance in sensory details, to find specific details for his emotionalized ideas. His diary continues his spadework in experience—past, present, future. Even his best flashes are likely to be gone unless he puts them down in black and white. An idea or a detail, once put down, tends to attract others. If a student assembles a great heap of honest experience, so much the better. From his collection he may use only his best; but his thorough search for material tends to fertilize or condition his mind to the creative attitude.

The third means for a student's achieving self-exploration is his teacher's help to the recognition of creative values in his material. Here the teacher is a friendly adviser. Probably the best teacher of

creative writing is one who has written enough to know first hand how bits of raw material may be used (whether he has published or not); how to select the details for a mood; how to find emotionalized pictures or ideas and to turn them into poems; how to simplify aims and to choose the best methods for bringing a character to life; how to take a character, an idea, a bit of personal philosophy, a personal problem and from this small beginning to develop a short story.

The fourth means to a student's self-exploration is the personal conference. The teacher who gets results must have a deep and an honest friendliness toward many sorts of personalities. He may use direct or indirect probing. Indirect probing comes from being quick to notice chance suggestions about the student's interests or attitudes. Direct probing is useful when a student co-operates freely, when he is willing to answer questions, when he is treated as an adult who is free to say so if he does not wish to continue certain lines of questioning, and when he knows that his confidences will be respected.

Here are examples of first aid to self-exploration by the personal conference. A girl comes in needing subjects. We start asking what people have influenced her life for better or for worse. A stepmother appears—one who made life miserable for her and whom she has never talked about. She decides to resurrect the stepmother. Her teacher does not make the decision for her. After an honest piece of writing (though not a very artistic one in this special case) she says, "Well, it was a relief to get that out of my system. Now while I was doing that I thought of some other things, too." And we have a good start on finding subjects.

A senior young man comes in, troubled because he has not even the slightest idea for a short story. I ask him what is his greatest personal problem at present. He says, "Oh, that's easy. I've led such a secure and carefully planned life, with such completely normal people. What's going to happen to me when I get on my own?" I ask a few more questions; he must soon decide between a fellowship which will keep him in the old groove next year and a tough job out West. He is next persuaded that he has good story material—a human problem to be solved and a character whom he understands to do the solving. He decides to use the third person, building a char-

acter like himself, under another name and with a slightly different physical appearance. In ten minutes he is started on a short story which becomes his best work.

A senior girl who is beginning a second quarter of creative writing comes in worried because she has no ideas. She is a sensitive writer. I remember that she loved horses and wrote about them. We start discussing the origin of that interest. (Some of the best results seem to come from catching a student's attitude and then hunting its origins.) She tells me that her father keeps horses on the farm. Finally I get this explanation, "Well, to my father, a farm is chiefly a place to educate children, and horses are a part of that education." I ask when she first realized her father's purpose, and whether she ever came into conflict with his attitude. Soon she says, "Oh, yes, when I sold my own horse to have more money for college I discovered how father felt." In five minutes more we have a simple story planned. As her father's farm sounds interesting, we talk for a few minutes more and find a childhood memory of a hawk's nest, with the first realizations of growth and change; a vivid picture of a little sister's illness; an important desire at present, to escape the campus routine and to have time for thinking. Such a conference has yielded vital material.

The results of self-exploration are many-sided. The student usually finds a storehouse of material, like a bank account, from which he may draw at need, and in finding this material his mind is being sensitized to creative attitudes. When he tries a sustained piece of work he can usually keep his own interest alive for several weeks, for vital material kept alive by the use of the senses does not easily die. Perhaps he progresses better if he does not stop to bury too many corpses of stories that "died a-borning." The student who explores himself produces work with more originality than he could otherwise find; for the true source of originality is not in an outer and a mechanical struggle to be different but in a discovery of one's deepest thoughts and feelings. And he may find that creative satisfaction is in direct proportion to his own use of vital material. Last of all, in self-discovery he has had something like an objective look at himself in relation to his world. Such a look at self is perhaps a beginning of sound human education.

ROUND TABLE

THE USE OF EXAMINATION PAPERS IN LINGUISTIC STUDY

The marking, over a number of years, of school examination papers in English has convinced the writer that in them we have probably the only modern equivalent of those old diaries and family papers which are of such value to the student of language who is trying to discover the state of pronunciation, colloquial syntax, etc., at a given period.¹ As all writers on the subject have pointed out, the printed page has always had a comparatively limited value in such investigations (except at a very early stage, or when we are dealing with verse texts. Drama is useful for syntax and vocabulary, of course, but indications of pronunciation have to be treated with caution, largely because we cannot be sure of the author's notation). Moreover, the spread of secondary-school education in the present century has greatly increased the tendency toward uniformity in ordinary writing of even an informal and private nature. As a result, there is on the whole a greater discrepancy than ever before between the written and spoken languages. But in the case of examination papers, which are generally written under pressure of time with (sometimes considerable) excitement, the "rules" of grammar and spelling are apt to loose their hold, and we frequently find records of what is happening to the structure and pronunciation of English, and these confirm for the most part the results of speech observation. The evidence is particularly valuable when we bear in mind that it comes from a distinct social and educational group. All the papers investigated were written by pupils at School Certificate stage—i.e., by boys and girls of (roughly) from sixteen to eighteen years of age, attending secondary or high schools,² and therefore they represent an important speech division, that of the "young standard" of the middle and lower-middle classes.

¹ "The importance of the private, often unlearned person, compared with the professional scribe, is that the former, no matter how lofty his station in life, very often cared but little for scribal tradition, but constantly forgot it, and therefore drifted unconsciously into a spelling which expressed, more or less faithfully, his pronunciation" (H. C. Wylde, *Short History of English*, p. 153).

² It would have been interesting to carry this investigation further, and to see how many of the candidates held scholarships from elementary schools, and so on, but I had not the necessary data.

A detailed study of a set of about seven hundred such papers confirmed me in the following belief: (a) Even after ten or eleven years of intensive teaching on more or less standardized lines, conventional spelling is by no means fully imposed on someone writing in a hurry.³ This is not a question of literacy. In fact, the good candidate often makes more "mistakes" (that is, writes what he hears and not what he is taught to see) than the poor one, as he has usually more to say during his two or three hours, and therefore less time for reflection. (b) Certain speech tendencies condemned as "bad English" by the grammarians are gaining ground so rapidly in ordinary speech that they are naturally transferred to the written page in moments of stress. So strong are they, indeed, that they even overcome the desire to "write correctly" in order to impress the examiner.

I have deliberately excluded a mass of extremely interesting material from Welsh children for whom English is a second, or even a foreign, language, and another from Scotland, which has its own linguistic genius. I have confined myself to schools in which the "standard" is presumably spoken and certainly taught. I have ignored the occasional dialect word, and the far from occasional use of slang, both English and American.⁴

My findings can be grouped under the three heads of "Sounds," "Morphology," and "Syntax."

A. Sounds

1. Substitution of [n] for [ŋ] in a final position. (Very frequent in speech, and not, I think, confined to the illiterate and the "huntin' and fishin'" groups. It is perhaps rather more common in the North than in the South.)

incline for *inkling*

The writer probably forgot the word he was writing, when he added the *e*; but he certainly records a pronunciation in [n] and not [ŋ]

2. *wh* pronounced [w] initially. (The "historically correct" development. The tendency to restore the spelling-pronunciation usually makes itself seen in postschool periods.)

wether for *whether*

where for *were* (twice)

were for *where*

wist for *whist*

³ It is not, indeed, fully imposed after a considerably longer period. I constantly come upon *might of been*, *he as not*, etc., in the work of undergraduates.

⁴ This is often breath-taking. I have seen Ophelia referred to as Hamlet's "girl-friend," and Chaucer's Squyer called a "pansy."

3. Changes in consonantal sounds to facilitate pronunciation in difficult groups
 - a) Voicing or un-voicing

passed for *past*
constable for *constable*
 - b) Introduction of an intrusive *p* in the group *-mt*

drempt
dreampt
 - c) *againts* may be a slip, or it may indicate the obvious difficulty of pronouncing the *-nst* group
4. Loss of consonants in "awkward" groups
 - a) Accepted losses

hankerchief
exhausted
sacastic
 - b) Losses current, but not accepted

govermmments
frienship
reconised
5. Loss of initial [h] in words in unstressed positions

who as landed
6. Confusion between words with the same pronunciation but different spelling

wears for *wares*
course for *coarse*
court for *caught*
you for *yew*
thrown for *throne*
new for *knew*
knew for *new* (three times)
bread for *bred*
mislead for *misled* (This, together with *bread*, is obviously influenced by the much more common *read-read* class of preterite)⁵
7. Particularly interesting, perhaps, is the little group

hough for *huff*
unsitely for *unsightly*
wrighting for *writing*

These are extreme examples of the instinctive "jib" against the apparent unreason of English spelling.
8. The form *commudity singing* can represent nothing but an adenoidal pronunciation

⁵ [Or by *lead*, the metal.—EDITOR.]

9. Loss of vowels in unstressed syllables

*diffrence**intrest*

10. Confusion of vowels in unstressed syllables

*emfersises**oppertunities**nowerdays**sympertthetic*

Lucaster (Extreme. Suggests that the candidate had not "read his set-books," as proper names are usually so deeply printed on the pupil's mind that they are correctly spelled)

*manuer**marrige**hurrid**ingenius**clert*

reslerant (A very interesting spelling, showing a completely anglicized form that is rapidly ousting the original French. Cf. the two forms of *garage*)

B. Morphology

1. Verbs

a) Confusion between the preterite and past participles of strong verbs, particularly those of Class 3

sung preterite of *sing**sunk* preterite of *sink**rung* preterite of *ring*

This confusion is rapidly spreading. It is current even in university circles, and I find "The men who *sunk* the submarines" in the *News Chronicle*, November 7, 1939, and "Those who *sung* its virtues" in R. M. Wilson's *Early Middle English* (1939). It has been suggested to me that the above forms are "old preterites" rather than past participles. This does not seem to me to be the probable explanation, as they would be preterite *plural* forms. Cf. Old English *singan*, *sang*, *sungon*, *sungen*. The tendency has, in every case, been to level out at an early date the different forms of the preterite singular and plural. Cf. Old English, *ridan*, *rad*, *riden*, *riden*; Modern English *ride*, *rode*, *ridden*.

b) New formations on the analogy of other strong verbs

sook preterite of *seek* (Probably influenced by *forsake-forsook*)

c) New preterite of a strong verb formed on the analogy of weak verbs

weaved preterite of *weave**flunged* preterite of *fling* (A "double" preterite)

2. Nouns

- a) *Rooves* plural of *roof* (On the analogy of *hoof-hooves*)
- b) We might include here the new formation
genuity for *genuineness*

C. Syntax

- a) There is a general tendency to ignore the "unreal" rules about not ending a sentence with a preposition and not splitting an infinitive
- b) An interesting example of a group genitive is found in
the day before's milk

Another batch of seven hundred papers would undoubtedly yield an equally large set of "mistakes," some of which would be additional to the ones given above. I have myself come across a quite considerable number of false concords between subjects and verbs, particularly when they are separated by two or three other words. There are also very frequent examples of *different to* (increasingly current, even in highly educated circles: I have heard a professor of English habitually use this form), and even of *different than*. But the evidence given above proves that examination papers provide something more than work for the examiner and marks for the candidate. They are, linguistically, the modern equivalent of the *Verney Memoirs* and the *Paston Letters*.

KATHLEEN M. DEXTER

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE SOUTH WEST
EXETER, ENGLAND

DIFFERENTIATION IN FRESHMAN COMPOSITION

The English teachers at Kemper Military School have experimented for several years with a deviation from the normal content of freshman composition and find that it answers many of their needs more effectively than its traditional predecessor. Although not a cure-all even for Kemper's problems, it does popularize this subject. The first semester's work follows quite closely the typical university pattern. The variation begins with the second semester.

We of the English department at Kemper contend that a boy does better work if he has some choice of the subject-matter content of any subject. Thus we provide him a three-way division of English composition from which he makes his selection. The central themes of the three divisions are journalism, contemporary literature, and vocational guidance.

If a boy is sold on a career in newspaper work, his writing the second

semester involves editorials, feature stories, sports, sidelights, etc., or, if he wishes to work on the school paper and needs background for his local endeavors, he is placed at his own choice in the journalistic branch of English composition. Grammar in this group grows out of the individual writing projects and is not studied *in vacuo*. Newspapers of the better kind are studied carefully and criticized. Outside reading takes primarily the form of nonfiction, although we are not adamant so long as enthusiasm is created.

Many students, after reading some of the better books of recent vintage the first semester, become interested and wish to read more extensively. For these students the second semester of English composition becomes primarily a reading course, with the writing directed toward literary criticism and evaluation. Grammar again is entirely functional, its only excuse for existence being the mistakes made by individuals in their book reviews. I arbitrarily require three books a month for a fast reader; for others the assignment varies with ability.

The last division has to do with a survey of the vocations and professions. We fit this course into our vocational-guidance program and try primarily to unsell cadets on law, medicine, and engineering and to sell them on their father's factory or hardware store. We feel that a boy of seventeen or eighteen often knows medicine as only a name. Thus we try to open up to him the various ramifications of a medical career with its tedious preparatory years, its irregular hours, and its unpleasant emotional possibilities. I mention medicine as just one example. This type of English composition involves longer but fewer themes and teaches the term-paper technique thoroughly. Grammar again emanates from the writing.

Kemper has rather arbitrarily divided its second-semester English-composition course three distinct ways only because this division fits a local need. I don't advocate necessarily a similar division elsewhere, but I do suggest that English teachers forget about tradition long enough to evaluate course content in the light of a given situation. The stigma of compulsion too frequently sets students against English composition; and if prejudice can be removed by so-called "unorthodox methods," the end justifies any reasonable means, it seems to me. Any change in the regular order is objectionable if artificial progressivism motivates it. But, if any alert English teacher sincerely feels a need for change, let him defy tradition and make it.

GAIL M. INLOW

KEMPER MILITARY SCHOOL
BOONEVILLE, MISSOURI

A READING PLAN FOR FRESHMAN ENGLISH CLASSES

A survey of departments of English in more than one hundred colleges and universities indicates that assigned readings are required in practically all courses in freshman English. There is not, however, any uniformity of reading requirements among the various institutions, nor, in certain cases, among the instructors in the same institution. The requirements vary from the classical to the contemporary and include all literary forms. Some instructors prescribe books of collected essays, while others assign a miscellaneous reading list without regard to chronology, form, or type.

I, too, have evolved an individual program for Freshman readings. Although I do not make any extravagant claims for its effectiveness, I have, during a ten-year period, been well pleased with the results. I require a three-hour weekly minimum of readings with brief written summaries handed in at the end of each week. The readings are selected from current periodicals which I divide into three groups, and I recommend that the student read a minimum of one hour a week from each group.

The first group is composed of the leading professional and technical journals such as the *Journal of Agricultural Research*, the *Journal of Farm Economics*, the *Journal of Accountancy*, *Harvard Business Review*, the *Electric Journal*, the *Journal of Chemical Education*, the *American Journal of Public Health*, the *Journal of Home Economics*, the *Journal of Nutrition*, the *Elementary School Journal*, *School and Society*, *Education*, etc. The second group consists of those periodicals noted for their literary excellence such as *Poetry*, the *Saturday Review of Literature*, *Harper's*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *College English*, the *North American Review*, etc. The third group includes those periodicals which deal primarily with current social, economic, and political problems such as *Time*, *News-Week*, *Forum*, the *Reader's Digest*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Current History*, the *American Political Science Review*, the *Political Science Quarterly*, etc.

Through this reading program, I introduce the Freshman to his professional field, thereby correlating the course in English with other phases of the curriculum. I attempt also to develop in the freshman the habit of reading those current publications which are outstanding for their literary and cultural value, and to broaden the range of his understanding and appreciation of contemporary life.

T. J. FARR

TENNESSEE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

CURRENT ENGLISH FORUM

Please indicate whether it would be correct to say: "He looked 'out' the window" or "He looked 'out of' the window." Is there a good standard reference you could recommend on the idiomatic use of certain prepositions?

W. P.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* records both constructions without suggesting a preference for either. *Out* followed by *of* is the older construction, occurring in the earliest records of the English language. *Out* was originally an adverb, and the *of* which followed it had its primary sense of *from*. The prepositional use of *out* is cited from 1250 on.

The most extensive work of reference dealing with matters of this sort is J. C. Fernald's *Connectives in English Speech*, although its author at times shows a tendency to condemn constructions which have the sanction of cultivated usage. He considers *out* in the sentence quoted above as "colloquial or obsolete." For a more condensed treatment, confined to the prepositional connectives, see G. O. Curme, *Syntax*, pages 562-66. A good dictionary is very likely the most satisfactory source of information.

Our English teachers have asked me to write your department for answers to questions on punctuation. What would be your rulings on the comma, semicolon, and period in relation to closing quotation marks? Are these examples always correct? (1) "...," (2) "..."; (3) "...."

What ruling do you advocate for underscoring titles of books and short stories? Some of us hold that titles of books should be underscored while those of short stories must be put in quotation marks: The Good Earth; "The Gold Bug."

W. B.

You are correct in assuming that the semicolon always follows and that the comma and the period normally precede the quotation marks. There are times when placing the comma or the period within the quotation marks seems illogical (e.g.—According to Johnson's opinion "the first Whig was the Devil.") but the practice is so firmly established in printing and publishing houses that it is not likely to change.

So far as the indication of book titles is concerned, usage is fairly evenly divided between italics (indicated in manuscripts and typescripts by underscoring) and quotation marks. Book publishers generally favor italics, whereas newspapers, since their fonts do not always contain italic type, prefer quotation marks. A smaller number of publishers, chiefly newspaper, treat a book title as any other proper noun, capitalizing it but omitting the quotation marks.

In respect to short-story titles, even the committee in charge of this department appear to differ in their practice. Professor Perrin, in his *Index to English*, recommends quotation marks for short-story titles, and without question there is much to be said in favor of some such uniform practice. I observe, however, that in the Introduction to the Everyman edition of Poe's *Tales* the short-story titles are italicized throughout. So far as my own practice is concerned, I believe that I should put the short-story titles in italics when they are not being cited in conjunction to, or in connection with, the title of the book or collection in which they appear. For example:

I enjoyed reading Poe's *The Gold Bug*.

"The Gold Bug" is one of Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*.

Will you please indicate whether the following sentence is grammatically correct: "This magnificent view is enhanced by beautiful Mount Baldy, snow-capped at this time of year, which stands as a sentinel over the fertile valley below and which at times resembles a Japanese print."

Doesn't the co-ordinating conjunction "and" connect two relative clauses modifying "Mount Baldy"? Is the second "which" correctly used?

O. B. R.

The sentence you quote is unsatisfactory in its present form because, as you suggest, the conjunction *and* does imply that the two subordinate clauses are parallel in construction. Yet the antecedent of the first *which* is clearly *Mount Baldy*, but the antecedent of the second appears to be *view*. Certainly the last clause, or at least the idea embodied in it, should be placed much closer to the word it modifies. *And which* should not be used to join a single subordinate clause to an independent statement if the relationship between the two parts of the sentence is to be clearly expressed.

NEWS AND NOTES

THIRTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The Stevens Hotel, Chicago
November 21, 22, and 23, 1940

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

GENERAL SESSION, 8:00 P.M.

Presiding, Helene W. Hartley, Syracuse University, Second Vice-President of the Council

Greeting from the English Teachers' Organizations of the Chicago Region and Illinois—Sophia C. Camenisch, Chicago Teachers College, President of the English Club of Greater Chicago

President's Address: "And among These . . ."—E. A. Cross, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley

The Grammar of American English—Charles C. Fries, University of Michigan

The Present Status of English in the Schools—Dora V. Smith, University of Minnesota

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

GENERAL SESSION, 9:00 A.M.

Presiding, E. A. Cross, Colorado State College of Education, President of the Council

Reading for Comprehension and Appreciation—Mortimer J. Adler, University of Chicago

Theories of Language and Understanding—I. A. Richards, Harvard University and Cambridge, England

NOON LUNCHEON MEETINGS

1. *Elementary English—Library*

2. *Drama*

Presiding, Carl Wonnberger, Cranbrook School, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Speakers: Walter Dill Scott, Northwestern University; David Itkin, DePaul University and the Goodman Theater, Chicago (formerly of the Moscow Art Theater)

3. *International Relations*

4. *Folklore*

Chairman, Marquis E. Shattuck, Director of Language Arts, Detroit

Folklore of the Woods and Ranch—E. C. Beck, Central State Teachers College, Mount Pleasant, Michigan

5. *College*

Chairman, Warner G. Rice, University of Michigan

AFTERNOON SESSIONS: 2:00 P.M.

CONFERENCE SERIES

(Unless otherwise noted attendance at each conference will be limited to 50)

SERIES A: Adapting the Curriculum in English to Particular Needs—Nellie Appy, Broadway High School, Seattle, Washington, *General Chairman of the Series*, with the Committee on Individual Differences

SERIES B: Creative Writing

1. *Collegiate Level*

Elizabeth Atkins, University of Minnesota

Arno L. Bader, University of Michigan

LeRoy H. Buckingham, University of New Hampshire

Carson C. Hamilton, Michigan State College

Anna von Helmholtz Phelan, University of Minnesota

2. *Secondary Level*

H. A. Domincovich, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia

Abigail O'Leary, Central High School, Minneapolis

Alice L. Vail, Senior High School, Tucson

Carlton F. Wells, University of Michigan

3. *Vertical Aspects*

Kathleen G. Ammerman, Central School, Glencoe, Illinois

John T. Frederick, Northwestern University

Edna L. Sterling, Lincoln High School, Seattle

SERIES C: Making Use of Expanding Facilities

1. *Motion Pictures and the English Class*2. *Youth and the American Newspaper*

Presiding, Laurence R. Campbell, University of Illinois

Reading Newspapers in Times of Crisis—Paul Hutchinson, Managing Editor, *Christian Century*

Newspapers and the European Scene—Irving Pflaum, Foreign Editor, *Chicago Daily Times*

Newspapers and the American Front—Curtis D. MacDougall, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University

High-School Newspapers in a Warring World—Joanna Zander, Englewood High School, Chicago

3. *Radio and the English Class*

(Attendance not limited)

LARGE-GROUP PROGRAMS

1. *Language and Semantics*

Steering Committee: Lou L. La Brant, Ohio State University, *Chairman*; Paul Diederich, University of Chicago; Albert H. Marckwardt, University of Michigan; Louis Zahner, Groton School, Groton, Massachusetts

Presiding, Franklyn B. Snyder, President, Northwestern University

Application of Theories of Language and Understanding—I. A. Richards, Harvard University and Cambridge, England

2. *Literature*

Presiding, Allan Abbott, Teachers College, Columbia University

The Study of Literature—Norman E. Nelson, University of Michigan

Literature and the Emotions in Public Education—Daniel Prescott, University of Chicago

How To Read a Book: An Illustration—Mortimer J. Adler, University of Chicago

Summary and Comment—Allan Abbott, Teachers College, Columbia University

3. *Reading*

4. *Speech*

Steering Committee: Gladys L. Borchers, University of Wisconsin, *Chairman*; Harlan M. Adams, Chico State College, Chico, California; Ethel Kaump, East High School, Madison; Franklin H. Knower, State University of Iowa; Mary Sands, Texas State College for Women, Denton
Presiding, Gladys L. Borchers, University of Wisconsin

Speech Training for the English Teacher—Clarence Simon, Northwestern University (20 minutes)

The Functional Integration of English and Speech Education—Franklin Knower, State University of Iowa (20 minutes).

Demonstrations by High-School Students—Lena Foley and Charlotte Wollaeger, Shorewood High School, Milwaukee (30 minutes)

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 4:30 P.M.

ANNUAL BANQUET, 6:30 P.M.

Toastmaster, Harry G. Paul, University of Illinois

The Present Status of Scandinavian Literature—Harry Goddard Leach, President, American Scandinavian Foundation, formerly Editor of *Forum*

How a Book Grew—Elizabeth Page, author of *The Tree of Liberty*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

SECTIONAL MEETINGS, 9:00 A.M.

1. *Elementary School*

2. *Junior High School*

3. *Senior High School*

4. *Junior College*

Steering Committee: Neal M. Cross, Menlo Junior College, Menlo Park, California, *Chairman*; Walter Crosby Eells, American Council on Edu-

cation; Helena Gavin, Wilson Junior College, Chicago; Malcolm McLean, Hampton Institute; W. J. Sanders, Visalia Junior College, Visalia, California

Presiding, Neal M. Cross, Menlo Junior College, Menlo Park, California

Theme: What Is Junior College English?

The Unique Position of Junior College English—Marjorie Mitchell, President, Cottey College, Nevada, Missouri

Business English in the Junior College—Turner Trimble, Herzl Junior College, Chicago

Language Problems in the Junior College—Roy Ivan Johnson, Stephens College

Literature in the Junior College—Ruth Goodrich, Fort Dodge Junior College, Fort Dodge, Iowa

5. *Joint Meeting of College and Teachers College Sections*

Topic: The Preparation of High-School Teachers of English

Chairman, Ida A. Jewett, Teachers College, Columbia

Chief Questioner, Warner G. Rice, University of Michigan

Discussion: 1. C. C. Fries, University of Michigan

2. Ronald S. Crane, University of Chicago

3. Herbert W. Smith, Principal, Francis W. Parker School, Chicago

4. W. W. Parker, President, Southeast Missouri State Teachers College, Cape Girardeau, Missouri

5. Karl Bigelow (tentative)

Questions from Audience

Discussion Summarized: Professor Rice.

6. *Adult Education*

Chairman, William Glasgow Bowling, Washington University

The Adult in Courses in Writing—William Glasgow Bowling, Washington University

The Adult in Courses in Literature—Curtis Avery, University of Minnesota

The Adult in Courses in Speech

Discussion

*7. Joint Meeting of Directors of the Association of Journalism
and the National Council of Teachers of English*

ANNUAL LUNCHEON, 1:00 P.M.

Presiding, Robert C. Pooley, University of Wisconsin, First Vice-President of the Council

Trailing and Capturing Elusive Genius—Ken McCormick, Editor for the Doubleday, Doran Company

Criticism by Description—Mark Van Doren

How Writers Write—Louis Bromfield

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL
COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

1. It is proposed by the Executive Committee that the third sentence in Section VI, "Membership," be amended to read:

Bona fide associations of teachers of English, of twenty-five or more, such as the English sections of state, regional, or city teachers' associations, shall be eligible to collective membership, when approved and accepted by the Board of Directors of the National Council.

2. It is proposed by C. C. Fries that the third paragraph, Section IV, "Officers and Management," be amended by

(1) substituting for the first sentence of the third paragraph the following:

The directors shall choose annually from their own number a president, three vice-presidents, and a secretary-treasurer, who shall serve in these capacities both in the Council and on the Board. The vice-presidents shall be designated as follows: vice-president in charge of college affairs; vice-president in charge of secondary-school affairs; vice-president in charge of elementary-school affairs.

- (2) reducing the number of members of the Executive Committee in addition to the officers from three to two, and their terms from three years to two years.

These amendments will be voted upon at the Annual Business Meeting (of all members of the Council) on Friday afternoon of the annual Thanksgiving convention.

W. WILBUR HATFIELD
Secretary

In 1939 the Rockefeller Foundation made a grant of fifty thousand dollars to be used by Harvard University over a five-year period in support of Dr. I. A. Richards' research in the use and teaching of language. Dr. Richards and his collaborators are giving particular attention to classroom application of the theories of language which he has led in developing over many years.

The Rockefeller Foundation has also given twenty-two thousand dollars to the Payne Fund for the preparation of English texts to be used in classes of foreign-born adults and for building programs to train teachers for such classes.

The Central Missouri State Teachers College has hit upon an excellent method of diffusing culture and at the same time increasing its own prestige. It has co-operated with the Federation of Women's Clubs of Missouri in the preparation of *A Reading List for Adults*. This bibliography defines a plan for the systematic reading of contemporary literature, including books on social problems, science, etc., and gives data concerning publishers and prices.

THE PERIODICALS

In the *American Mercury* for August, Philip Rahv discusses rather disparagingly "The Men Who Write Our Plays." That American drama is at this time far ahead of that of Europe is small praise. It is perhaps no worse than before the present period (undefined by Mr. Rahv) began, because the restricted compass of a play prevents drama from great advance in times of literary expansion and thus from the corresponding recession.

In recent years our drama has shifted its interest from private prob-

lems and morals to those of society. Compare *Winterset* and *Awake and Sing* with typical earlier plays such as *Desire under the Elms* and *Craig's Wife*. "Nowadays personal and social problems are so closely linked that to disconnect them is to treat them abstractly and hence unintelligently." But doctrinaire political plays, because they are bad art, are unsuccessful.

Three younger playwrights have gained general recognition. Odets, the most gifted, is serious, naturally apt at the dramatic form, with an effective vernacular style. But he is not growing—preoccupied with the thwarted, self-pitying, garrulous young man in a great city. Moreover, he fails sometimes in critical sensibility and sometimes in technique. Lillian Hellman, as social-minded as Odets, is a better technician and highly successful in presenting malevolence—as in *The Children's Hour* and *The Little Foxes*. Her dialogue is too neat and dry, her incidents frequently arbitrary rather than inevitable. When she tries class-struggle themes she fails sadly. William Saroyan, recipient of the Pulitzer Prize and the award of the Drama Critics' Circle, charms by his enthusiasm even though it is directed chiefly at himself. *My Heart's in the Highlands* is an integrated play, but the others are strings of stylized vaudeville skits.

The principal fare of the contemporary theater is provided by older playwrights. George Kaufman is more showman than dramatist. Rice is a journalist of the theater. Robert Sherwood, also journalistic, with *Idiot's Delight*, *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, and *There Shall Be No Night* has enlivened the dramatic medium and extended its range. Anderson and Behrman are undoubtedly the most accomplished of the group. Anderson, the most overrated of contemporary dramatists, falls short partly because he persists in trying to impose the old technique of verse upon unsuitable material, partly because he aspires to the grand drama without the native capacity to produce it. Behrman is correspondingly underrated, his conventional comedy-of-manners technique causing critics to forget his significant subject matter—as in *Rain from Heaven*, *End of Summer*, and *Wine of Choice*.

The tendency of many educationists to write and lecture in highly technical polysyllabic words rouses B. G. Portwell to a tirade against "Mumbo Jumbo in Education" in the *American Mercury* for August. Most of his citations are amusing or disgusting, according to the reader's mood. He unkindly—and in most cases unjustly—declares that the use of such language is an attempt at self-aggrandizement through mystification of the audience.

Lovers of Gerard Manley Hopkins will appreciate Terence Heywood's compact review of the literary ancestors and contemporaries who influenced or closely resemble one who is himself a striking influence upon the poetry of this generation (*English*, the magazine of the English Association, Spring, 1940). That St. Ignatius and Duns Scotus gave Hopkins a heritage of philosophy has been recognized before. By temperament loving the primitive and wild, Hopkins was congenial in spirit with Hardy and Emily Brontë, with Walt Whitman, with the extreme romantic Charles Doughty, and with the writer of Dorset-dialect poems, William Barnes. Love of the primitive led Hopkins, as it led Barnes, to study Anglo-Saxon and to lament its early diminishing control of English. He studied Welsh, from which he drew the inspiration of *cynganedd*, or consonant chime, used in the Welsh classical verse.

The signs of Hopkins' affinity with the metaphysical poets are his sinuous, rugged imagery, his sprung rhythm itself, which is incipient in the poetry of Donne and many of his followers, in his peculiar blend of passion and thought, and his figures, which show the brain work but not the far-fetched ingenuity of the conceit. Like Donne, Hopkins conveys moods of extraordinary complexity, and he shows a like mastery of rhetoric. He studied Herbert, whose trim, highly finished verse acted as chief model for his own early devotional poems. In detail of word choice and imagery, Hopkins curiously resembles the wilfully odd Edward Benlowes, *Theopila* (1652).

Hopkins learned from Shakespeare and from the Greeks, from the romantics (he suggests what Keats might have become), and from the major poets of his own generation, including Emerson. In his mature poetry all these influences are so well assimilated that they never emerge as echoes.

In "Back to Poetry," the *Atlantic Monthly* (August), Mr. Conrad Aiken analyzes the impersonalized and dryly intellectual character of that verse, predominant for the past decade, which is associated with the poets Auden, Day, Lewis, Ransom, Tate, and others, and which has been rationalized by such critics as Mr. Cleanth Brooks and Mr. Allan Tate. Poetry has become overridden by theory—a sign that having reached the end of an epoch, it has gone sterile. In critical theory and poetic practice the emphasis falls upon technique, dexterity, and decorum. Under the burden of the sociological demand, poets anxiously restrain any spontaneous personal feeling and cultivate the required seemingly offhand but careful flatness of language.

But an "abject abrogation of the rights of the individual" is inimical to poetry. By turning away from the individualism which the lyric nature demands, the poet eschews his integrity and confines himself to what is rightly called "a poetry of exclusion," which depends upon denial of the subjective for the sake of the poet's "observations," his prescribed subject matter, and his "intellectual faculties."

Sharing the responsibility with the sociological writers, the pedant-poets and the poet-critics, who have also multiplied in the past decade, have worked just as zealously to bring about a "poetry of exclusion." For them, a poem "should not mean, but be." On the contrary, the language of poetry is nothing but an objectification of feelings and beliefs whose *only* being is in its meaning.

A wholehearted Romantic revival is much overdue. "Let us," as Whitman says in the Preface to *Leaves of Grass*, "be reckless, lavish, generous, afraid of no extremes and no simplicities." Two of the younger poets—Mr. Dylan Thomas, English, "with a genius for word-magic," and Mr. Delmore Schwartz, American, brilliant in his psychological delvings and shapings—"are a promise as much as a fulfillment—they take us back to poetry again."

Another significant attempt to bring about social understanding is the new publication called *Common Ground*, edited by Louis Adamic for the Common Council on American Unity, 222 Fourth Avenue, New York City. The groups to be amalgamated in this case, however, are those living in the United States itself, and the method is the presentation in well-written English of ideals, culture, and social or cultural leaders of various national and racial groups now living together here in more or less amity. The list of contributors to the initial issue, dated autumn, 1940, begins thus: Mary Ellen Chase, William Riley, Van Wyck Brooks, Arthur M. Schlesinger, John Ciardi, Michael DeCapite, George M. Stephenson, Lola Kinel, Leon Surmelian. Black and white, Jew and Gentile, Slav, Mediterranean, and Teuton all appear in this remarkable cross-section of our culture and society.

The article by DeCapite, a second-generation American born in Cleveland, declares under the title "The Story Is Yet To Be Told" that though second-generation Americans have made real contributions to our literature, they have not yet achieved satisfactory expression. Tracing the immigrant novel from Rölvaag's *Giants in the Earth* and nonimmigrant Willa Cather's *My Antonia* down to the recent work of Pietro DiDonato, William Saroyan, Stuart D. Engstrand, and others, he thinks

that real art has been produced only when the immigrants or their children have held fast to their Old World ideals. For the most part these sons of foreigners have found themselves incompletely adjusted and under such social pressures that their books become confused in outlook and even in structure. Thus Rölvaag and Cather and Michael Pupin are single-minded, but even Rölvaag in *Peder Victorious* and *Their Father's God*, when he deals with the sons of the first settlers, becomes fumbling and uncertain. He admits that Dreiser, Dos Passos, and Albert Halper, because of their own extraordinary personal qualities, have for the most part been able to deal with the general American scene, but Herbert Krause's *Wind without Rain*, Sophus K. Winter's *All to Nebraska*, *Mortgage Your Heart*, and *This Passion Never Dies* and Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* show this disintegration of the individual in breaking loose from one culture and only beginning to grasp another. [It is possible that the new culture they are seeking to grasp is also confused. Political and economic events have unsettled many of the old American stock.—EDITOR.] Even James T. Farrell has become preoccupied with the shabby life of the Chicago shanty Irish which he so much despises, so that his writing is out of focus and fails when it departs from protest. DiDonato in *Christ in Concrete* is clear and sure of himself when he writes of his family but weak and vague when he tries to deal with himself and the world. The new American's feeling of insecurity appears even in Michael Pupin's *From Immigrant to Inventor* when he "proudly reproduces a routine letter written him by President Harding . . . who was his inferior as a man." Carl Christian Jensen and Stoyan Christowe in their autobiographies do well in dealing with their native countries but become incoherent and unconvincing in dealing with America and what it means to them.

William Saroyan is popular today not because he is a great writer but because he recognizes a humble sort of goodness in people and because he has accepted and used his Armenian background.

The best books of the immigrant and second-generation group are Rölvaag's *Giants*, Cather's *Antonia*, Cahan's *Levinsky*, and Pupin's life, but there is material for many, many more which may become a factor in the revitalization of America.

At Dorchester, England, on Sunday, June 2, the English Association commemorated the birth of Thomas Hardy a hundred years ago that day. The English Association differs sharply from its American counterpart in that while professional scholars are the most numerous element in its

membership and carry the burden of organizational work, the Association also includes many creative writers and a considerable number of laymen interested in literature. For example, the president this year is Earl Baldwin, of Bewdley, former prime minister of the Empire. In his address at the Hardy centennial meeting Earl Baldwin stressed Hardy's tragic sense of world-suffering in the war years of 1914-18 and Hardy's profound message of loving kindness. The Earl's address is to be found in *English*, the magazine of the English Association, for the summer of 1940.

There is now a magazine for people who read English as their second language—*Cameo*, published by Lorraine, Mullins, South Carolina. It is intended for circulation in the Western Hemisphere. It contains a variety of pieces, some in very simple English and marked in the Table of Contents and on the page itself with a single star; some intended for students of English and marked with two stars; and some intended for people who read English readily, marked with three stars. There are stories, articles, and poems—"all short so that they can be read before the reader becomes tired." One feature of every issue is some simple material in basic English with illustrations, primer fashion. The magazine is well printed, attractively gotten up with illustrations, and may prove a real service in the building of international understanding.

Some of the same result is being attempted by the *Reader's Digest*, which now issues a Spanish edition, many copies of which are being sent as gifts to people in South America by men of corresponding occupations in the United States.

The address of President Henry M. Wriston of Brown University, at the education section of the Eighth American Scientific Congress, in May, consists of a spirited attack upon the peccant humors of the college curriculum and an appeal for solid, philosophically discriminating readjustment. President Wriston devastatingly analyzes the excesses of pseudo-scientific educational methods and urges the reinstatement of education rather than mere training. Regarding the credit system he says: "The leveling process which relates all to the incidence of the body to a seat and reduces everything to an artificial and unreal 'credit' can not survive." His address is printed as "Problems of Higher Education" in *School and Society* for August 24.

The thirty-three poems first published in the posthumous *Collected Poems of A. E. Housman* are the basis of an article on "The Poetry of A. E. Housman" by John Peale Bishop in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* for

June. These additional poems do not differ greatly in kind or excellence from those we had, but they do reveal Housman's personal plight and show that he himself was all those lads whose execution he lamented.

Here was romantic subject matter—intensely felt self-condemnation—presented with classic strictness. But both his style and his amazing conventional career as a Latin scholar were but masks concealing a great emotional disturbance. Despite his apparent simplicity, Housman is always (deliberately) leaving the essential matter untold. This now revealed secret—an intense, real, impossible love, presumably experienced in London—explains the despair and the unsocial reticence.

In *A Shropshire Lad* Housman transforms his own scholarly personality into that of a young yeoman suited in person and circumstance to this love. Housman had seldom visited Shropshire and apparently chose it because it lay on the western horizon of his home, and in that direction lay the country of the dead, both of classical mythology and of modern soldier slang.

"To Housman, all loves are frustrate or faithless." True to the imagination, Housman seems to speak for all the young; but such loves as his are particularly distinguished by their brevity, and hence the special poignancy of his poetry.

Perhaps the purest poet of his age—at the end of which he came—his personal experience made his range small.

By means of x-ray and infra-red photographs C. W. Barrell has rather conclusively shown that the Ashbourne portrait of William Shakespeare is really an altered painting of Edward de Vere, seventeenth earl of Oxford. Mr. Barrell concludes that soon after Shakespeare's death someone who knew Oxford to be the real author of Shakespeare's works had the picture altered and retitled in order that it might half-conceal and half-reveal the true author.

Mr. Barrell's "revelation" (in last January's *Scientific American*) is resoundingly contradicted by Oscar James Campbell in the July issue of *Harper's*. In the first place, the Ashbourne portrait did not turn up until 1847, with only a dealer's unsupported assertion of its identity. Many fraudulent Shakespeare portraits were thus produced in the late eighteenth century.

The "anti-Stratfordians" first fathered the plays upon Francis Bacon, but the more intelligent, seeing that "no two minds were ever more fundamentally unlike" than those of the authors of the plays and the essays, have abandoned Bacon. Several other possible "Shakespeares" have been

put forward—now most often the Earl of Oxford. A successful writer of comedies, he was praised by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598) but there praised less than Shakespeare and not at all for tragedy. Meres is a main reliance of the Oxfordians.

All this search for an author for the plays is based upon the unwarranted assumption that "William Shakespeare was a kind of country lout," an illiterate scalwag forced to marry at eighteen a "loose" woman seven years older, a deer poacher, a hostler for horses ridden to the theater, and suddenly a dramatic genius.

Well-informed scholars would agree on something like this: William Shakespeare, son of a prosperous processor of leather, attended the excellent local grammar school; learned to read Latin easily and began the study of Greek; turned to teaching and wrote the *Comedy of Errors* and *Titus Andronicus* in imitation of Plautus and Seneca, respectively; took the comedies to London and sold them; became assistant to the theater "bookkeeper" who was prompter, librarian, and producer—the "Johannes Factotum" of Greene, one of the University playwrights whose living the upstart threatened.

These facts fit the knowledge and the misinformation which the plays show. The few parallels between the plays and Oxford's life and writings are coincidences; the superiority of Shakespeare's verse is notable. Moreover, great literature is usually "remote from the raw biological fact." It was the custom for the elegant to write poetry; why would Oxford have failed to own the successful sonnets and narrative poems? And would he have written humble dedications to the Earl of Southampton?

Mark Van Doren, Pulitzer Prize winner who has contributed several critical articles to the *English Journal*, writes on "Poetry and Subject Matter" in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for August 10. Art, says Van Doren, needs subject matter as much as it needs form, which is something more than technique. Since poetry began to lose its audience, criticism has tended to consider the tools of poetry rather than its shape and meaning. The difficulty of modern poetry is due not so much to its new techniques as to its lack of subject matter. This tragic lack of subject matter goes back as far as Wordsworth, who groomed himself for the composition of a long poem which could never be let die but got only as far as "The Prelude." Wordsworth and his successors have searched in themselves for something to say, but even the self has become doubtful and confused. The tone of complaint, sometimes rising to irony, predominates—the complaint of the universal death of subject matter. T. S. Eliot's

"The Waste Land" is but one of many demonstrations that poetry "has become impossible because the world no longer supplies him with things to love." Poetry has inverted the old themes, wine becoming drunkenness, war becoming horror instead of romance, and love shrinking to desire. "Virtue is vanity, glory is departed, justice is a joke, and God has not walked in the garden for centuries."

Is it, asks Van Doren, the world which has changed, or the poets and their outlook? The world is a bitter spectacle, but was it ever beautiful or good to eyes which could see nothing else? The actual world was never perfect, but now, unfortunately, "we stand too close to the little world to see the great one of which it is so inadequately and yet so uniquely the image."

True poetry demands good subject matter and form—which is not a mere collection of conscious tricks but a working-out, perhaps by means of tricks, of the way the artist sees his subject.

The July issue of *Theatre Arts* is devoted to the "tributary" theater, with emphasis on the Boston and Dallas regions. Several of the little theaters mentioned are collegiate.

BOOKS

LITERATURE AND ITS BACKGROUNDS

In the crowded market of English survey anthologies a new one must now scratch hard for an innovation to attract its public. But these two volumes¹ find their distinction fairly enough through a novel excursion into comparative literary study. About a tenth of their pages is given over to some forty Continental authors who have conspicuously influenced the course of English literature. Many a teacher must have wished that, as he led a class through *Prometheus Unbound*, they might have had Aeschylus at hand for comparison or that he might, perhaps, point out specifically the indebtedness of Congreve to Molière. So at least these editors believe; and such teachers have now a sound and substantial text of this kind.

But as an exercise in comparative literature it is necessarily very elementary and confined largely to direct copyings of form, ideas, and plot. Intellectual kinships and subtler borrowings within the whole complex scheme of literary influences have been very gingerly skirted as too involved, often, perhaps, too problematical, and in any case outside the scope of a text for the beginner.

Some readers will inevitably miss here their favorite examples of literary ties. Some may ask, for instance, why, if Guevara's *Diall of Princes* must be included for *Euphues* and a page of Euripides for Landor's *Iphigeneia and Agamemnon*, we might not have had a Platonic dialogue for the form of Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* or the attitude of Shelley's "Epipsychidion" and, perhaps, earlier versions of Arthurian legend for Malory or of the Don Juan story for Byron. But the editors have protected themselves by pointing out in advance that their method might have been extended indefinitely, and a fair critic must agree that they have carried through their plan consistently and with admirable taste and judgment. Earlier and less sophisticated or nationalistic periods clearly lent themselves more readily to this plan than did the nine-

¹ Bernard D. N. Grebanier and Stith Thompson, *English Literature and Its Backgrounds*. New York: Dryden, 1939-40. Vol. I, pp. xv+904; Vol. II, pp. 890+xvi. \$2.75 each; also in one volume, \$4.75.

teenth century, as the placing of more than two-thirds of the foreign material in the first volume would show. And the distinction between influence on a school or period against influence on a single author or work was sometimes difficult to maintain, as, for example, in the Vasari-Browning and Flaubert-Pater selections. But these are mere quibblings, unjust to the initiative and modesty shown in this pioneer anthology.

A more serious question must be the adaptability of any such text to the needs of the English survey. To begin with, in the current dispute about extensive versus intensive treatment this work leans definitely toward the extensive. Although about a third of the whole is devoted to generous representations of fifteen major figures (excluding Shakespeare), the total number of English authors runs to a hundred and forty. Many teachers, mindful of the difficulty of impressing this established body of English literature on their students in a year or less, may be wary of the additional foreign material with its inroads upon class time.

Further, the use of this material commits the course to a historical and critical study rather than merely to general appreciation in time sequence, especially since the foreign writers are admittedly included for their influence, not for literary merit or even chronological place. They may, in fact, disrupt the continuity of the fundamental study of English literature, sometimes without making very clear their relevance to it. Again, if any foreign authors are to be included in this course, some might think it more valuable for the literary neophyte to read Homer or *Faust*, whose traditions honeycomb our letters, than to study Theophrastus or *Werther* merely because they account more directly for a school or book. These questions cannot be dogmatically decided here since they involve the individual teacher's conception of the survey course, but this reviewer inclines toward a more intensive treatment.

Ultimately, the success of any English survey text must depend on the merits of its core of English selections, and here this anthology ranks with the best. The editors' claim for freshness in choice of material is well founded, granting that no anthology dare omit the classroom canon of inevitables. The selections are heavily weighted toward the nineteenth century—the second volume opening with the Romantic movement—and the twentieth century is wisely left out altogether. Eight English plays and two foreign ones provide a substantial survey of the drama. The introductions, though conventional and sometimes actually familiar, are extensive, sound, and conspicuously readable.

It is gratifying to report of any book that it has achieved its authors'

purpose. For those teachers who seek, in addition to the standard English material, a convenient introduction to the more obvious foreign relationships, this text will be found completely satisfactory.

ROBERT WARNOCK

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

ESSAYS FOR BETTER READING¹

The editors of this volume have produced a solid, fully edited textbook of forty-four modern essays—each supplemented with comprehension tests, exercises in vocabulary, hints for essays and speeches, problems in the library, and lists of related reading. The subjects covered in the ten sections of the book range from sports to literary criticism, for one purpose of the text is to “help the student comprehend the world in which he lives.” The other purpose of the book is, as the title suggests, to improve his ability to read.

The “special features” are the comprehension tests and the speed-of-reading tests. The latter should serve a useful purpose in singling out those who suffer from physiological handicaps, visual and otherwise. The comprehension tests should develop a student’s ability to seize the main idea and to relegate minor ideas to their appropriate positions. All in all, the training here given should make *better readers* of those who study this book.

I have italicized “better readers” because the training here given is primarily a discipline in comprehending expository, informational prose. This is all to the good, and few students get enough of it. But when the essays change from the objective, informational type like those by Stuart Chase to the subjective, emotional, satiric type like the sketch of Woodrow Wilson by Dos Passos, the tests weaken; for the student is not taught how to appraise writing in which emotion predominates or is so merged with the logical thought as to fuse with it into an idea that can be comprehended only by the reader reproducing within himself a state similar to that which controlled the mind of the author. For instance, when I tested the comprehension test on Dos Passos’ “Meester Veelson” from *U.S.A.* by taking it, I flunked it cold. For in the group of five statements supposedly containing a correct version of the “central idea”

¹ Edited by J. Hooper Wise, Herman E. Spivey, J. E. Congleton, K. G. Skaggs. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1940. Pp. 596.

of the essay, I could find none. To discover the reason for this failure, I wrote my own "central idea," and, as the following comparison shows, found that the difference lay in my inclusion of the emotional element and the test's exclusion of the same:

MY VERSION: I, Dos Passos, hate that modern Judas, Meester Veelson, that bookish, Bible-reading betrayer of the masses, that God-fearing, double-crossing word-monger, who put mankind up on the block at Versailles and sold it down the river.

THE TEST'S VERSION: The peace conference was a tragedy for Meester Veelson, in whose fourteen points the hopes of millions of people rested.

But no text can be all things to all teachers. *Essays for Better Reading* has much to recommend it; and its sustained drive toward more logical, analytical reading is a merit not to be overlooked.

EDWARD A. TENNEY

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

IN BRIEF REVIEW

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

The Beloved Returns. By Thomas Mann. Knopf. \$2.50.

Thomas Mann has in this story of genius presented many implications. The theme is the love story of Goethe and Charlotte Kestner. After a separation of years Charlotte is again drawn by her old love for Goethe to meet him again. This meeting is described as only Mann could write of it.

The Happy Highway. By Francis Brett Young. Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.50.

Lovely rural England and the problems of simple people form a background for this new novel by the author of *White Ladies* and *They Seek a Country*. Owen Lucton, prosperous middle-aged businessman, found that life had palled; to his family he was only a provider. The story of his rebellion and his revaluation of people and of life are wholesome and refreshing.

The Fire and the Wood. By R. C. Hutchinson. Farrar. \$2.50.

Joseph was a brilliant young Jewish doctor in Germany in 1932, a newly appointed staff member in a large hospital. He was a scientist, working, he believed, on a cure for tuberculosis. His human experiments led him to a poor servant girl, but the Nazis came before he had time to prove that his cure was genuine. Suspense and characterization give a powerful lift to the story.

Sullivan. By Clyde Brion Davis. Farrar. \$2.50.

Gilbert Sullivan (no *and*) was hitchhiking to Reno when he met McKinley Williams, tombstone-cutter, who, under Sullivan's direction, immediately became a sculptor. The

two proceeded to California via Mexico. A fantastic riotous account of their experiences makes excellent reading. Mr. Davis will be remembered for *The Anointed* and for *The Arkansas*, one of the Farrar "River Series."

So Perish the Roses. By Neil Bell. Macmillan. \$2.50.

This fictionalized biography of Charles Lamb, with realistic pictures of his family and friends and of the women he loved, is interesting and convincing.

The Vantage Point. By Hilda Morris. Putnam. \$2.50.

By the author of *Long View*. "In a way we of our generation stand at a peculiar vantage point. We know the old ways and the new." This excellent story concerns an oddly assorted household of old and young—employed and unemployed.

Tassels on Her Boots. By Arthur Train. Scribner. \$2.75.

Through the efforts of a young lawyer, according to this story of New York in the plush days of Boss Tweed, the city finally threw off the yoke of the spoilers. A love story adds glamour to the setting.

John Brown's Cousin. By Jane Hutchens. Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50.

John Brown's cousin was a conscientious objector who hated violence of any kind. He escaped to Canada during the Civil War and he lived among Indians. He was a fur-trapper for the Hudson's Bay Company, a courageous man who wouldn't fight. Fictionized biography.

Tumbleweeds. By Marta Roberts. Putnam. \$2.50.

The sympathetic, well-planned story of a Mexican family, living in poverty in California and yearning to return to their old home.

Whiteoak Heritage. By Mazo de la Roche. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

Readers of the "Jalna" series will find that Miss de la Roche has returned to that period (1919) when young Rennie comes home from the war to find his father dead and the Whiteoak clan awaiting a new master.

The McKenneys Carry On. By Ruth McKenney. Harcourt. \$2.00.

The author of *My Sister Eileen* has written a riotous story about the fun she has had just living. A public in need of cheer is sure to welcome it.

Fables of Our Time. By James Thurber. Harper. \$2.50.

You will recognize this new version of "The Country Mouse" and "Red Riding Hood" and chuckle at the morals and illustrations. Harpers has recently been besought by cable for permission to reprint pieces by the author of *The Lost Flower* and *Let Your Mind Alone*.

The Schoolmaster of Yesterday. By Millard Fillmore Kennedy and Alvin F. Harlow. Whittlesey. \$2.75.

A three-generation story. Grandfather began teaching at twenty, son at seventeen, and grandson at nineteen. None had training. The history and development of Indiana are the background for these wholesome reminiscences. The morale of these fine men is shown in the final paragraph: "If some way could be devised in a centralized system of breaking up mass production and working more in individual equations . . . one of its

earliest objectives—the building of character . . . it might go far toward creating a better world.”

Faith for Living. By Lewis Mumford. Harcourt. \$2.00.

Mumford strives to give courage and hope to people seeking strength to live through the insecurity of the present.

Pilgrim's Way. By John Buchan. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.00.

Lord Tweedsmuir finished this excellent autobiography just before his death. It is philosophical, readable, and, for all its subtlety, a revealing study of Britain such as we would expect of one of her great novelists.

The Buckeye Country: A Pageant of Ohio. By Harlan Hatcher. Kinsey. \$3.75.

This is a rich history of Ohio written by one who loves his native state and glows with pride in the part his five generations of ancestors have played in developing it.

Father Was an Editor. By Joshua K. Bolles. Norton. \$2.50.

In tone similar to *Horse and Buggy Doctor*, *Country Lawyer*, etc., this tale of small-town life and editing a newspaper will please many readers.

Minority Report. By Bernard DeVoto. Little, Brown. \$2.75.

Vigorous, amusing, satirical comments upon a wide range of topics—historical, literary, and critical—relating to contemporary America. These selections have been culled from the *Saturday Review of Literature* and *Harper's Magazine*.

A Search for a Happy Country. By Marion Foster Washburne. National Home Library Assoc. \$0.50.

By a happy country the author means one where people have food, shelter, occupation, health, love and family, freedom of expression. In the Foreword and Introduction she explains that this search took place in 1936-37, and the present war is the development of the struggles going on then. She centers on the causes of war and possibilities of their removal. She visited practically every part of Europe, and her conclusions are important.

Across the Busy Years. By Nicholas Murray Butler. Scribner. \$3.75.

The final volume of memoirs by the president of Columbia University. Prominent people he has known and his European experiences since 1890 figure largely in his reminiscences.

Winston Churchill. By René Kraus. Lippincott. \$3.00.

The author has known Churchill personally for many years, and readers will find this study of the British leader convincingly sincere.

Engines of Democracy. By Roger B. Burlingame. Scribner. \$3.75.

The author of *March of the Iron Men* discusses the changes in American life brought about by machines. Well illustrated.

Leonardo Da Vinci: Artist and Scientist. By Leo Lerman. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.00.

An excellent biography of the great painter.

Eleven Verse Plays, 1929-1939. By Maxwell Anderson. Harcourt. \$3.75.

Modern and historical dramas, and two shorter plays. *Elizabeth the Queen* and *Winterset* are included.

Country Editor. By Henry Beetle Hough. Doubleday. \$3.00.

Editor Hough and his wife, graduates of Columbia School of Journalism, forsook newspaper work in New York to own, edit, and publish the *Vineyard Gazette* on the Massachusetts island of Martha's Vineyard. The country editor pays tribute to village life, to simple wholesome people, to values too many of us have forgotten. Written with a distinction which rings true, he pictures for us two people who savor life and find it good—very good.

Big River To Cross. By Ben Lucien Burman. John Day. \$3.00.

This is a captivating river-book, a very complete and appreciative study of the Mississippi from St. Louis to the Gulf—its past importance, the inhabitants along the banks, their customs and lore, tall tales, local boats of all descriptions, with many allusions to the history and influence of the Upper Mississippi.

The Brewer's Big Horses. By Mildred Walker. Harcourt. \$2.50.

By the author of *Dr. Norton's Wife*. Sara's father wrote: "A lady cannot run a brewery . . . without sacrificing her dignity." Her parents were godly people and a bit intolerant. The scene is a Michigan town; the time, 1892-1918. Suspense, vitality, and social understanding make this a worth-while book.

The Underground Stream. By Albert Maltz. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

A knowledge of author Maltz's former proletarian studies will attract many readers and repel others. In this novel Maltz is concerned with human values and with justice in the old sense of the word. Princey, the central character, works in a motor plant; his wife in a laundry. Union and communist organizations, kidnapping, and violence assume dire importance.

Gypsy, Gypsy. Rumer Godden. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

The author of *Black Narcissus* has again written an unusual novel—a horror story in fact. The central character, an unscrupulous older woman, abnormal in her behavior, is skilfully developed.

Geese in the Forum. By Lawrence Edward Watkin. Knopf. \$2.50.

"I trust I oblige all honest men by ridiculing the national tendency to substitute gimcracks for liberal education . . . when enthroned geese relegate the Romans to the farmyard." John Burgess, southerner, married a northern girl. Her father and his uncle established him as teacher in a southern college. The intent of the author, who is professor of English at Washington and Lee University, is "to depict the professor as a human being."

Three Plays. By William Saroyan. Harcourt. \$3.00.

The Time of Your Life, *Love's Old Sweet Song*, and *My Heart's in the Highlands*, which was, to the surprise of critics, a Broadway hit. Heywood Broun said of it, "It is one of the finest plays ever written for the American theater."

The Bridge. By Ernest Poole. Macmillan. \$3.50.

The author of *The Harbor, His Family*, etc., who has long been a thoughtful student of world-issues, presents an earnest and wholesome reminiscence of living and writing and friends. His unbiased study of those social and economic forces which he believes have brought about the present world-chaos is readable and convincing.

Moon Tide. By Willard Robertson. Carrick. \$2.50.

When the Swede, a tough former sailor, rescued Ada from suicide, a pathetic love story developed. This is a poignant and beautiful tale, simply told.

You Can't Go Home Again. By Thomas Wolfe. Harper. \$3.00.

The continuation of *The Web and the Rock*, the story of George Webster, is poetic, philosophical, and self-revealing, as are all of Wolfe's writings.

The Pacific Ocean. By Felix Riesenbergh. Drawings by Stephen Voorhies, maps. Whittlesey House. \$3.00.

This first volume of an "Oceans of the World" series is a beautiful book, full of excitement and achievement, of exploits of famous men, including Magellan and later those Connecticut sailing masters whom we call our own. It is well planned—at times a bit too detailed—and beautifully executed.

Decisive Battles: Their Influence upon History and Civilization. Major-General F. C. Fuller, British Army (retired). Scribners.

A lengthy book—a historical pageant—of timely interest to readers of history. There are striking omissions and inclusions. A book of such scope naturally calls for different points of view.

The "Argonauts." By Lillian E. Ross, George Whitman, Joe Wershba, Helen Ross, Mel Fiske. Modern Age. \$2.75.

Two girls and three boys, just out of college and all having done work on college newspapers, set out to see the world—and judge it. Traveling fifteen thousand miles in three months, they saw "the people" and their representatives. The truths which these young minds explored and discovered are of utmost importance. And—they rode home reading the "Help Wanted" ads.

A Man Named Grant. By Helen Todd. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.50.

This biography of the Civil War president, fictional in presentation, is an absorbing story with superb character analysis.

J'accuse: The Men Who Betrayed France. By Jean Rolland. Dial. \$2.50.

A book of importance to United States readers—similar in scope and intention to *Why England Slept*. Written by a man who knew personally the men whom he accuses of betraying France.

Idle Money, Idle Men. By Stuart Chase. Harcourt. \$2.00.

With his usual vehemence, Stuart Chase discusses the vital economic and social issues of this strange new world.

Why England Slept. By John F. Kennedy. Funk. \$2.00.

The son of the United States Ambassador to England studies the crisis in England with the idea of applying the lesson learned through her mistakes to strengthen our own defenses.

Madame Dorthea. By Sigrid Undset. Knopf. \$2.50.

A story of eighteenth-century Norway; a portrait of a woman with great responsibilities suddenly thrust upon her by loss of husband and money.

Oriental Assembly. By T. E. Lawrence. Dutton. \$3.00.

This volume, of interest to Lawrence enthusiasts, contains one hundred photographs and a miscellaneous collection of Lawrence's writings about the East.

Joyce Kilmer: Poems, Essays, and Letters. Doubleday. \$3.50.

Five hundred sixty-one pages in one volume. Illustrated. Memoir by Robert Cortes Holliday.

The First To Awaken. By Granville Hicks. Modern Age. \$2.50.

A novel of the year 2040. George Swain, American, permits himself to be the guinea pig for a scientific experiment. He is put to sleep for a century; he is awakened in a new America and exults in the greater intellectual and physical progress—but some problems remain unsolved.

The Gap of Brightness: Lyrical Poems. By F. R. Higgins. Macmillan. \$1.25.

These lyrics from Ireland reflect both melancholy and sensitivity to the subtle flavors of life in nature. Higgins' lines are direct, brutal at times, and even the softer, more melodic, passages are terse.

The Spirit Watches. By Ruth Pitter. Macmillan. \$1.50.

Winner of the Hawthornden Prize, with a rapidly growing reputation both in England and in the United States, Ruth Pitter offers in this slender new book of verse a variety of poems preoccupied chiefly with the delights of form and color and lacking almost completely the sense of hope and despair and futility, and insight into the significance of living now, which is characteristic of the great majority of the moderns.

Hamlet Had an Uncle. By Branch Cabell. Farrar. \$2.50.

As many readers will remember, some years ago James Branch Cabell ceased to write, but Branch Cabell took up his pen. Old admirers will find *Hamlet Had an Uncle*, in all its witty ridiculous aspects, similar in vein to the Jurgen creations.

Period Piece: The Life and Times of Ella Wheeler Wilcox. By Jenny Ballou. Houghton. \$3.00.

"Ella Wheeler Wilcox was pure thoroughbred lowbrow, yet in some preposterous, important, and unique way she is tied up, too, with the best that can be found in America," writes Jenny Ballou, who feels a certain gentleness and respect for "a vulgar vivid personality" whose poems had an enormous appeal to readers seeking heart throbs.

FOR THE TEACHER

Booklist Books: 1939. American Library Association. \$0.75.

An annotated list of books for the general reader, selected by librarians and compiled by the staff of the *Booklist* from 1939 publications. The titles are classified under "Libraries and Writing," "Religion," "Social Science," "Language," "Useful Arts," and similar headings, as well as such classifications as "Fiction," "Children's Books," and "Technical Books." An analytical index is provided.

Democracy: A Reading List. Compiled by Benson Y. Landis. Part II of the January, 1940, issue of the *Bulletin* of the American Library Association.

A valuable annotated list of recent books on the problems of democracy, classified according to such topics as "Rival Systems," "Public Opinion," "Religion," "Economic Issues," and the like.

Holmes of the Breakfast Table. By M. A. DeWolf Howe. Oxford University Press. \$2.50.

A remarkable portrait of the urbane Autocrat, with illuminating sketches of the Boston of his time. Numerous concrete references to men and events help to re-create the characteristic traditions of an important section of literary New England.

The Public Junior College Curriculum. By Clyde C. Colvert. Louisiana State University Press. \$2.25.

Tabulations concerning the offerings of junior colleges in the field of English are presented on pages 13-18. The tendency in larger colleges seems to be to offer some other course in Freshman English than composition, while in the smaller colleges Freshman English is usually a course in composition.

Adaptation of Instruction to Individual Differences in the Preparation of Teachers in Normal Schools and Teachers Colleges. By Carleton D. Mason. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. \$2.50.

A survey of the results of experiments in individualization in teacher-education institutions through the use of plans of independent study and individual interviews. Limitations and special needs revealed by these experiments are fully described.

A New Design for Women's Education. By Constance Warren. Stokes. \$2.00.

The president of Sarah Lawrence College, famous as an experimental woman's college, describes the philosophy and curriculum of an institution which builds its program upon the needs and interests of those who are to be educated.

The Poetry of Matthew Arnold: A Commentary. By C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry. Oxford University Press. \$3.50.

A companion volume to a new edition of *The Complete Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold*, planned for publication in 1941, containing a critical commentary on the individual poems, which are classified under the headings "Early Poems," "Narrative Poems," "Lyric Poems," "Sonnets," "Elegiac Poems," and "Later Poems." Sections on the canceled and unpublished poems of Arnold, as well as a map of the scholarly country, are included in the volume.

FOR THE STUDENT

The Short Story: Studies in Creative Reading. Edited by Lester Collins Farris. Turner E. Smith. \$2.00.

A collection of short stories designed to promote creative reading and to guide students in the writing of short stories. The selections have been classified as illustrations

of motif, background, character, and dramatic quality. Bromfield, Oppenheim, Suckow, Mansfield, Galsworthy, Ben Ames Williams, and James Still are among the authors presented.

Freshman Composition. By Paul Nissley Landis. Heath. \$1.50.

A well-written, somewhat advanced, discussion of the problems of English writing and the mechanics of language. Emphasis is upon the stylistic quality and techniques of literary production.

Interpretation of the Printed Page. By S. H. Clark. Revised by Maud May Babcock. Prentice-Hall. \$2.00.

A new edition of this text on effective oral reading maintains the essential point of view of the original but supplies greater variety of appropriate illustration and a more effective arrangement of the content.

Preface to World Literature. By Albert Guérard. Holt. \$3.50.

In vigorous, colorful language, supported by an amazing variety of illustrations from all the literatures of the world, a leading literary critic presents his philosophy of literature. In the style of an expert lecturer he treats such topics as literary taste, folklore, such movements as classicism, Romanticism, realism, and symbolism, the various literary forms, the relation between literature and society, art for art's sake, and the function of criticism. The treatment itself is not chronological, but comprehensive appendixes present in syllabus form basic information concerning the various divisions of world-literature, classification of fiction, and glossary.

An Introduction to Drama. By G. J. Newbold Whitfield. Oxford University Press. \$1.35.

An introduction to the study of the drama from Sophocles to Bernard Shaw through selections from *Oedipus*, *Everyman*, *Faustus*, *Macbeth*, *Everyman and His Humor*, *The Way of the World*, *The London Merchant*, *Maria Marten*, *Caste*, *Strife* and *The Insects Play*, with brief introductions under such headings as "Plays of Men and Fate," "The Drama of Human Greatness," "Sentiment in Melodrama," and "The Modern Stage."

You and I. By Rufus Gunn King, Jr. National Home Library Foundation. \$0.15.

As the drift toward war for America becomes more pronounced, there is an ever greater need for such frank and direct personal discussions of the war issue as this. Its keynote is that wringing our hands is futile and wasteful and that we need to stand together in our efforts to abolish war.

Life Studies: A Collection of New Monologues. By Tom Powers. French. \$1.00.

These sketches of interesting people the author has known were originally written for radio but are suitable for use on the stage.

Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden. By Allan H. Gilbert. American Book. \$4.00.

Theories of poetry held by critics from Plato's time to the year 1700, presented in extracts judiciously chosen from their writings.

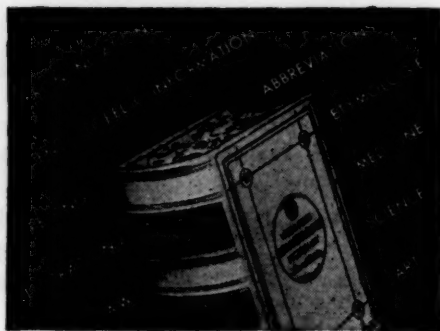
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